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CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTIAN ORDINANCES AND OFFICES OF WORSHIP.

How fresh and new old questions appear to new people! What the world thought it had settled ages ago, or at least had discussed till nothing remained to be said upon the subject, turns up again, after five-and-twenty or fifty years, just as new as if it had never before been heard of. The young metaphysician of this day cracks his philosophical nuts as earnestly and confidently as his ancestors, who broke their teeth upon nuts of the same growth, and were often disappointed to find little or no kernel within. The young poet has many an original idea, in which he is afterwards surprised to find he has been anticipated by Shakspeare or Milton. And the young divine makes discoveries in theological knowledge, or offers suggestions for an improved *culte*, in which he has to be told he is only repeating the thoughts and efforts of fifty years ago. Very natural and genuine is all this; very right in itself (barring the ignorance which it sometimes betokens); very refreshing for those of us to witness as spectators who before mingled in the conflict; and very good for the world, which would not accept our settlement of the question as final, and will, at the best, only accept that of our earnest young friends until a still younger race than they shall rise up to "fight all their battles o'er again, and thrice to slay the slain."

Amongst the free English Presbyterian churches and their free-minded and cultivated ministers, there was always some diversity of opinion and practice as to the religious ordinances and offices most fit to be employed, while the gravity of such subjects and the stability of habit (nowhere more strong than in matters of religious observance) saved them from the danger of rash experiments and frequent changes. Thirty, forty and fifty years ago, I have heard every question respecting Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the modes of conducting Public Worship by Free Prayer and Liturgy respectively, discussed (if not settled) again and again, to revive as perfectly new questions among a new race of earnest minds.

Infant Baptism and the Lord's Supper commanded the general, but not universal, assent of our ministers and churches in my younger days. We spoke of them as Christian Ordinances or Institutions; not as Sacraments, which the Church of England makes them, in imitation of the Romish Church, which has, however, five Sacraments more. Yet such is the pertinacity of habit, that it was not uncommon (nor is it even now) to hear Sacrament Sunday spoken of among those who neither regard the Lord's Supper etymologically as a Roman *sacramentum* or oath of allegiance, nor accept the Church definition of it as a "sure witness and effectual sign of grace and God's good-will towards us."

It has always seemed to me one of the strangest things in my experience as a minister, that, with our distinguishing practice of *free communion*, scarcely a larger number of communicants assemble round the Lord's table in our churches than in others where they are only permitted to partake after examination and licence by the minister and deacons. It was my ever-repeated practice, on communion-day or on the Sunday before, to propound more or less fully the nature and purposes of the ordinance, to invite to a cheerful and loving participation in it, and to say a word by way of precluding difficulties and objections which seemed to stand in the way of its more numerous celebration. I found to my surprise again and again, that it was supposed and taken for granted by many persons that no one could partake the Supper with us till he had "been passed" by the minister or deacons. So pertinacious are prevailing impressions! Accordingly, I explained again and again the history and merits of the free and close communion question, and expressed or implied thenceforth in my pulpit notices that the Lord's Supper was administered *in free communion* to all who were minded thus to hold Jesus in remembrance. Again and again I set forth the scriptural history of the institution as purely a memorial act; traced its foundation in natural human affection; and endeavoured, according to my poor powers of persuasion, to find a place for it in the affections of my hearers. I always avoided the kind of argument which I had sometimes heard employed, to shew that it was a positive duty incumbent upon every Christian to the end of time. That seemed a hard way of appealing to the affections, and not at all accordant with the tone of its institution by the gracious Master, whose "Do this in remembrance of me," sounds not like the command of law, but the loving appeal of friendship. The great difficulty, in my experience, always was, to get people to accept it on this ground of love and friendship; so long and pertinaciously have all other churches put it upon other grounds or hedged it round with other attempted sanctions. The fear of "eating and drinking unworthily," and so of "eating and drinking damnation to themselves," proved to be at the

bottom of many a good Christian's scruples with whom I at last came into conversation on the subject. And many a sermon have I preached in earnest deprecation of the miserable fears, which an absurd mistranslation of Paul's words to the careless, dissipated Corinthians have raised in the minds of better Christians. "I don't feel myself good enough," has been a reason often expressed to me, and no doubt much oftener felt as a motive for abstaining from the Lord's table, by the very persons whom this very scruple has proved to be the most fit to receive its encouragement and blessing. Many, again, I have reason to believe, without partaking in this false scriptural scruple, shrink from the appearance of making that kind of extra religious profession which is (I have always thought) needlessly caused by our mode of celebration. The practice of holding a separate service, and the fact that the majority of the congregation leave the chapel before that separate service begins, gives to the few who remain a sort of invidious distinction (shall I say) which they would be most glad to lose by enjoying the company of a larger number. Long years ago, I suggested to my people the propriety of making the communion service an integral part of the monthly or bi-monthly morning service for the whole congregation, in the midst of which I proposed to leave the pulpit and (with the aid of one or more of the elders) carry round the bread and wine, which each person present might partake or not as each pleased; one great advantage of this method being, that those who for any reason disliked the outward participation, would communicate not the less truly in spirit, to their own unmixed satisfaction and edification. For there have always been amongst us thoughtful and spiritual-minded persons who, with or without any defined Quaker feeling of repugnance to the outward rite, have felt that the mental participation was all they desired, and that the interposition of the actual elements of bread and wine obstructed rather than aided their service of remembrance, in which with mind and heart they were sitting with Jesus at his last passover. My suggestion did not meet with any hearty encouragement. People cling fast to old ways; and a new way must be very clearly better, and many degrees better, than the old, to be preferred practically. Perhaps I might by persevering obstinacy have succeeded at last in introducing my plan; but I always paid full deference to the congregation's right to be part and parcel of every arrangement connected with their own social worship, and I did not choose to attempt the alteration (as some ministers would) on my own authority; so the pure *vis inertiae* of habit kept us as we were, in spite of many individual expressions of accordance with my ideal celebration. If I am rightly informed, something of this kind has been tried in some of our congregations in the North of England with success and acceptance. Were I still young and in service,

I think I should make one effort more to introduce it, at least experimentally.

A very different class of scruples from the spiritual-minded view of the Lord's Supper which I have just mentioned, I have occasionally had to combat or provide for as best I might. There were some plain Scripture-loving people among my first congregation, who rarely attended our administration (which was held after the ordinary morning service), because, as they truly remarked, "the scriptural time was evening." "Who ever heard of a supper i' t' morning?" said a good woman of this class to me. I could not say I had; though it occurred to me that I might have sufficiently perplexed the old lady's ideas of time by a learned disquisition on the *prandium* and *cæna* of the ancients, and by shewing how their hours had fluctuated with the fashions of the day; whence, coming down to modern times, I might have shewn how the modern English breakfast and dinner stand respectively at the ancestral hours of dinner and supper; and the latter, I might have suggested to my good old friend, is pushed into the next day morning! But I thought it better to admit freely that her scriptural criticism was quite correct, and that the Christian church in general was wrong if they thought the Lord's Supper had been instituted after morning service in the Temple. Yet I did not suppose this was the idea of those who celebrated it in the morning. It was simply for the sake of general convenience, as the larger number of the congregation usually assembled in the morning; and I supposed that, in any places where this happened in the afternoon or the evening, the same argument would lead to the celebration of the ordinance accordingly. My old woman, it was evident, was not by any means satisfied with such a reason for leaving the letter of Scripture; but she often communicated, though in the morning.

Another Scripture-loving woman, having asked for an opportunity of religious conversation with me, informed me that she did not think we celebrated the Lord's Supper rightly, because we used *light bread*; "and you know, Sir, the passover bread was unleavened." It was no use for me to suggest that the passover included also a roasted lamb, which she did not think essential nevertheless; and that, as our Lord used the bread which was before him for another purpose, we could hardly be wrong in using our customary bread. The unleavened idea was strong in her mind; and she asked me with some hesitation and diffidence, whether she might bring her own bit of unleavened bread with her. She would eat it without anybody noticing that she did different from the rest. Of course I had no objection, and she did accordingly, to the entire satisfaction of her very clear and strong, but too literal, scruple. I have often set parallel to this good woman's scruple the modern "tee-total" objection to the use of port wine at the Lord's Supper, which

rests on the presence of alcohol, a product of fermentation, in that beverage, and attempts to fortify itself by scriptural argument. Our modern tee-totallers (monstrous word for so monstrous a theology!) are quite sure that the Jews could not use fermented wine at the passover, because they were forbidden the use of leaven and (say these critics) all its products. They assume that Moses had studied modern chemistry, and had identified the vinous fermentation of the grape with the sourness of the kneading-trough. He only neglected to record these discoveries distinctly in the Law. For want of doing so, his disciples, age after age, while strictly scrupulous about the leaven of bread, never imagined themselves to be sinning against the Law by drinking the cup of thanksgiving. My old woman was a better scripturist by far. She had the Jewish scruple about the bread, and the Jewish simplicity about the wine. It gave me sincere pleasure to respect and satisfy such a feeling in such a mind. The same good woman had a peculiar idea about baptism; which, however, I did not comply with, but gently combated and trusted to its gradual decline. She was full sixty years old, I suppose, when first she attended my ministry, having lived among the Calvinists till then, but feeling that she could not heartily adopt their terrible doctrines of Divine wrath. After worshipping with us for some time, she expressed a wish that I would baptize her. She had been baptized when an infant by a Calvinist minister; but now that she did not believe their doctrines, she did not feel as if she had been *rightly baptized*. I told her, that if I were to do it at her time of life it would be like saying that she had not been among Christians all these years, which was very different from my way of thinking about the Calvinists and all other sects; for though I differed very much from their doctrines, I never doubted that they were Christians as well as ourselves. The good woman evidently felt the force of the remark, but repeated the request, after taking (as I desired her to do) a week or two for consideration; and when, in finally declining to do it, I repeated my objection to seeming to unchristianize her old associates, she added: "Well, but I could have liked ye to do it for me!"

The scriptural rite of Baptism, its purpose and mode of celebration, had engaged my young attention as a diligent reader of the Bible. While a student at the York College, I endeavoured to master the question fully; and I was soon afterwards put upon my defence by finding myself among Adult Baptists, who, (as I before mentioned) formed part of my first congregation. The prevailing, and indeed almost universal, practice of my elders and contemporaries in our ministry was Infant Baptism. Our lay families had scarcely begun to ask themselves whether there could be a doubt as to the propriety of a practice almost universal among Christians of all denominations, and in itself

appealing affectionately and beneficially to the best feelings. Priestley had indeed, by pointing out the historical grounds on which the practice rests, invited difference of opinion as to the obligation of the rite. I had never been satisfied with his attempt to put Infant Baptism on the footing of apostolical authority. Nor did Belsham's "Plea," some years later, satisfy me better. They seemed to me to be trying to prove too much. The ancient practice of Infant Baptism in families already Christian, is indeed plainly shewn by them; and it may be fair to infer hence that the practice probably had apostolic sanction. But this does not establish the *authority* of Infant Baptism, nor will it satisfy the advocate of *Believers' Baptism*, who must have chapter and verse for everything, and insists strongly that he can prove the Baptism of the New Testament to have been administered to adults only, and its mode to have been invariably that of immersion. I came, indeed, to the same conclusion as to the nature of the New Testament Baptism, and only differed on the all-important practical question, whether such Baptism was designed to be permanent in the Christian church, and to be administered to the youth of Christian families as they grow up towards maturity. I found that the rite, as described or alluded to in the Acts and Epistles, was always administered on conversion either from the Jewish faith or from Gentile idolatry, and denoted the admission of the convert into the Christian community, emblematically signifying, at the same time, the purity of the new religious profession which he had assumed;—that it was administered upon repentance and profession of belief in Jesus as the Christ, and was considered as betokening the "remission of sins" (whether by this last phrase was understood the outward and ceremonial sinfulness of an uncovenanted state merely, or the moral improvement also involved in the change);—that the subjects of the rite were persons indifferently of either sex, but of such age as to be (in all clearly described instances at least) capable of appreciating Christianity and feeling the import of the rite;—that its mode was immersion;—that its form was not verbally prescribed and invariably followed;—that it was administered sometimes by the apostles personally, sometimes and probably more often by others under their direction;—and also and most remarkably, that the gift of the Holy Spirit, either at the intercession of an apostle or by more direct communication, followed the administration of the rite, except in one instance (the first preaching of Peter to Gentiles), when the gift of the Holy Spirit preceded, as if to invite and sanction, their baptism;* and another† (the case of Simon the sorcerer), in which the insincerity of the profession prevented the gift following the rite which had been administered. I thought my friends the

* Acts x. 44—48.

† Acts viii. 13—24.

Baptists wrong simply in their omission to notice this last fact, and the corresponding promise of Jesus Christ upon which the whole practice of the apostles had been grounded. The Baptismal commission (as it is called) consists of two parts, a command and a promise. The command is, to Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, and baptize those who believe. The accompanying promise is: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out demons, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark xvi. 17, 18.) The Adult Baptist strains the command so as to include "every (human) creature" most strictly, in every nation and in every age. I considered it to be limited and explained by the accompanying promise, which is seen to have been fulfilled in the hands of the apostles, and cannot be shewn to have extended beyond; for I see no proof that any but apostles were empowered to confer spiritual gifts. Certainly they do not ensue on the reception of Adult Baptism in the churches which now administer it.

These were substantially the same views of the apostolic rite of Baptism as had been expressed long before by Mr. Emlyn, and more recently by Gilbert Wakefield. But I differed from those two brave-hearted men in clinging to the usage of *Infant Dedication* at least, if we might not have Infant Baptism. They would have entirely abolished the practice as unnecessary and as founded on theological mistakes. I would have retained it as a natural and desirable expression of family religion, only separating it from its falsely-supposed connection with the very different rite of Apostolic Baptism. These views prevailed among not a few of my early contemporaries, and have been rapidly on the increase since. It has been a question with many who hold them (and was with me for a while), whether it is proper to retain the ceremony of sprinkling water in such a Dedication service. They are to be honoured who abstain from it through fear of sanctioning mistaken or superstitious ideas. I scrupled the use of water myself for about a year perhaps, when most intimately connected with Adult Baptists; and my adoption of a pure Dedication service without emblem or ceremony accompanying, was plainly a distinct and separate thing from their right of Believers' Baptism. Yet on further thought and experience I could not see why I need be debarred the customary use of a striking and simple emblem. The Baptist can claim no religious monopoly over clean water. It belongs to the symbolism of all times and nations, appealing not always to the religious sense, but more widely to the imagination and the feelings. The Jews had a variety of baptisms or washings, some prescribed by the Law, others by tradition; whether that of immersing a prose-

lyte from Heathenism was among the latter or not. And if those among whom I minister are intelligent enough to perceive that the baptism of adult Jews or Heathens by the apostles on their conversion to Christianity is one thing, and the thanksgiving and prayers and self-consecration of Christian parents on the birth of a child is another and very different thing, I do not see why we should fear lest these two things should be confounded together, or why we need debar ourselves the use of a beautiful emblem which is consecrated to child-like innocence and Christian purity by the practice of ages. For myself, I did not scruple the sign of the Cross also in Baptism, though that special emblem of the gospel had in the days of our stoutest English Puritanism been renounced by the noblest-hearted men as a stumbling-block and snare. The Puritans may have been right in their day; but such "superstitious fear of superstition," such formal avoidance of formalism, appears needless and undesirable in the Unitarian church of the present day at any rate. I am glad to think that the use of Infant Baptism is as prevalent as ever among us. Its hold is upon the affections; and the scriptural rite, special to the apostolic days, is understood to be so totally distinct and different from this dictate of domestic Christian feeling, that we are no longer liable to doctrinal or biblical confusion between the two.

The desirableness of Liturgical services, in comparison with the prevailing Dissenting method of Free Prayer, was a question frequently discussed in my younger days. And as it has lately claimed some fresh attention among our body, I think I may suitably, and perhaps usefully, detail the part I had occasion to take in the question about thirty-five years ago. It was soon after my removal to B. that a wish was intimated to me by one or two of the upper-class members of the congregation, for the introduction of a Liturgy. I said at once, that though my own habits and preferences were on the side of the customary Dissenting method, my feeling in this direction was not so strong as to make me resist the wish of the congregation if it should prove to be in favour of a Liturgy. It was agreed, therefore, that a congregational meeting should be called, after a while, to consider the question. And meantime I prepared a discourse in which (from the text, "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding") I endeavoured to do impartial justice to the arguments on either hand, without striking the balance; while I also made it my business to ascertain as many particulars as I could respecting the experiments hitherto made in various churches of our body in the use of a Liturgy.

The abstract arguments *pro* and *con*, are soon stated, but they are very variously estimated by different minds. For a Liturgy the great argument is, that in order to pray with both spirit and understanding, it is necessary to know what devout feelings and

wishes we are about to express, as with this knowledge and the confidence inspired by it we can give ourselves more freely and fully to the service; whereas, with a minister's free prayer, the mind of the worshiper has a double and sometimes inconsistent effort to make: first, it must listen and understand the sense of the words spoken, and then make the sense so accepted into an act of worship. No doubt this argument has great force in favour of a Liturgy compared with *extempore* prayer at any rate. But the carefully composed written prayers generally used by our ministers, and recurring perhaps every two or three months, are on a par with a series of Liturgical forms composed by the same persons,—except so far as the use of the printed book may assist the devotional attention of some, and possibly obstruct that of others. The argument for a Liturgy founded on its supposed superior solemnity or simplicity of style, depends, of course, upon the framers of the Liturgy in question compared with the individual minister understood in the comparison. But it ought to be felt by both alike, that the composition of prayers for social worship requires certain qualities almost peculiar to itself. A clearness and simplicity, with solemnity of style, uttering the greatest thoughts and profoundest feelings without any attempt to make them seem greater or more profound by their mode of expression; a brevity of structure which permits the thought to be received without intellectual straining, and to be felt at once as the material of devotion; an extreme simplicity of verbal arrangement, free from inversion, free from studied ornament, free from sustained pomp or affected elegance of any kind,—is the very ideal of a devotional style, whether for the Liturgy or for the minister's written prayer. And, no doubt, all kinds of violations of these rules of good taste are committed in the free prayer of Dissenting chapels, not altogether excepting our own. The objection alleged against a Liturgy, that it becomes formal and unimpressive by perpetual repetition, is, I consider, quite fatal when applied to one uniformly-recurring service, as in the Church of England; but this objection is practically met by the proposal to have a course of six or eight services, and it is on this understanding that the question has to be now argued amongst us. Nor is the adoption of a Liturgy necessarily exclusive of free prayer to a certain extent. As the "Evangelical" ministers in the Church of England take the liberty of introducing it, even without rubrical authority, on entering the pulpit before giving out their text, our Liturgies might expressly provide a proper place for it as a regular part of the service, in which the minister might introduce special thanksgivings or petitions appropriate to special events or circumstances; or, in the absence of such specialty, might give utterance to that large kind of contemplative and adoring worship which is infrequent in Liturgies; their understood basis being

the expression of the common daily and hourly feelings, wants and hopes of the human heart in the direct language of thanksgiving for mercies and prayer for help. It is in the comparative infrequency of the latter kind of office that the services of Dissenting chapels are often most deficient; and it is in prayers of the former kind that the Dissenting minister is most liable to mistake, by running into the didactic and disquisitional style, by *discoursing* upon the Divine attributes, dealings and purposes, or at best omitting to give utterance to common, obvious thoughts and feelings relative to "our creation, preservation and redemption." As to didactic and disquisitional prayer, it is a contradiction in terms. No man of true devotional taste could be guilty of its perpetration. But among the elders of my early life there was a prevailing idea that the *long prayer* (as it was not inappropriately called) was not complete unless it comprised every devotional attitude of the soul in regular sequence. Following Matthew Henry, many of them became infinitely more formal than he either was or meant to make them by his "Method of Prayer;" in which he somewhat formally distinguishes the first part of prayer, which is Adoration of God and Address to Him; the second, which is Confession of Sin; the third, which is Petition and Supplication; the fourth, which is Thanksgiving for Mercies; the fifth, which is Intercession for others; besides Addresses upon particular occasions, and suitable forms for the Conclusion of our prayers. Many a good minister did I know among my elder brethren, who would have considered any long prayer incomplete which did not go through all these phases of devotion, and would have thought it very irregular even to take them in any other but the above-mentioned order. The five, six, or seven, or eight points of prayer, were as absolute as the old five points of doctrine used to be. The didactic style which characterized some of us, grew, I think, out of this prevalent regard to method and completeness in the "long prayer." It is usually shorter now and less methodically complete, to the decided advantage of devotional impression; and the change is pleasantly recorded in the usual substitution of the name General prayer for Long.

But to return to the question of introducing a Liturgy into our chapel at B. I took a good deal of pains, by correspondence in various directions, before our congregational meeting took place, to ascertain what had been the experience of various other congregations which had already tried the Liturgical form, both in the West of England and elsewhere. Much interesting experience was in this way communicated; and I procured copies of the various Forms of Service which had been drawn up at Portsmouth, at Exeter, at Liverpool, at Stourbridge, at Mansfield in Nottinghamshire (a reprint chiefly of our West-of-England services), and in some other places, besides Mr. Lindsey's Essex-

Street Reformed Common Prayer. I found that the adoption of the latter alone was comparatively rare, though it formed one of several services in some of the various collections. Here, then, was a general agreement as to the undesirableness of being restricted to one constant form, however good or venerable. Usually there was a different service for each Sunday in the month; some collections having four, some five, separate morning services; and in some there was the same number of afternoon services, while in other places the second service was left to be conducted on the old Dissenting plan of free prayer. In some places the adoption of a Liturgy had been the resource for getting rid of extempore tediousness and feebleness. On inquiry into the results of experience in different places, I learnt that, by common consent, the people's responses were considered a failure. The people did not respond, any better than (in those days) they did in the Church of England. One great recommendation of the Liturgical plan, therefore, based upon the presumed vocal participation of the congregation in the service, proved to be no recommendation at all; but its failure was a great discouragement. The clerk or leader was, in fact, the people's proxy; and there seemed no clear advantage in his being so rather than the minister. It appeared that in several places where a Liturgy had been used for a while, it had presently been laid aside. In Exeter it had been laid aside and again brought into use. There was no enthusiasm in behalf of the plan in any of the numerous letters received in reply to my inquiries. And, to make my story short, when we assembled in congregational meeting to discuss the propriety of attempting the plan at B., the original movers in the scheme declined the responsibility of proposing any alteration. I have no doubt they were in part influenced by a considerate regard to the pretty strongly expressed views of certain other parts of the congregation in favour of the old Dissenting plan (for which these latter would only have desired to substitute extempore prayer); but it was admitted that the result of our inquiries into the experiment as tried elsewhere was the reverse of favourable. Such was the state of the Liturgy question thirty-six years ago. I continued my written services, taking especial pains with their composition, and using them once in about two or three months, so as to make them sufficiently familiar for the habitual hearers easily to adopt.

But I do not, I confess, regard that decision as decisive of the whole question. In many places Liturgies have continued to be used or have been adopted since that time; and in most cases a new element of some practical importance has been introduced, namely, the *musical* utterance of the people's responses. This is done in monotone with organ accompaniment, the choir in fact leading and the congregation joining just as easily as in a hymn or a chant. Now I think this plan of *musical response*

is an essential to any effective Liturgical service. Responses, except when musically pitched, are necessarily most unmusical, most harsh, most disagreeable. Every one hears his own voice too plainly and his neighbour's also, neither of them being at any regulated pitch. And the consequence is, that the attempted response soon dies down into a mere form in the mouth of "dearly-beloved Roger," the clerk. In the Established Church, the plan of *intoning* has been adopted as an escape from this difficulty; but it is not necessary for our purpose that the prayers read by the minister should be intoned (which sounds very unnatural); we only require a musical tone to collect together the many voices in response. And I have heard this done very effectively in some of our places, with the simple aid of a monotone, and perhaps cadence added, by the organ. I am disposed, therefore, to look with hope and interest upon continued efforts to adopt the Liturgical form of worship to our wants and habits, under the various conditions already implied pretty plainly in my story. These are—variety of forms, so that the same may not recur too often; room for the minister's free prayer with understood arrangements; the forms so well selected from the best sources as to be decidedly preferable in themselves to the average of our ministers' written services; and musical accompaniment to the responses of the congregation. Under these conditions I should like to see the plan tried more fully and more numerously than it has been.

M. RONGE ON THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT REFORM COMMUNITIES OF GERMANY.*

IN speaking in this article chiefly of my personal conflict with the Catholic Church, I confine myself to those facts which will best illustrate how I grew out of the Catholic dogmas to a higher idea of humanity and a better knowledge of God. This will, I think, best help the reader to gain a correct idea of the character of the Reform movement of 1844-45 in Germany. It may, too, help to strengthen some youthful hearts in their inward struggles to be faithful to themselves and to God, and induce them, under the most trying circumstances, dangers and sufferings, not to despair.

My native place, a village in the mountains of Silesia, is situated in that district which had been forced back to Romanism by the Jesuits, in the war of Thirty Years, by the assistance of Austrian dragoons. The historians have termed this method of

* Continued from p. 45.

the Jesuits of converting Protestants to the mother Church, that of *Dragonnades*. In entering a Protestant town or village with the needful number of dragoons, these holy fathers, as they called themselves, ordered all Protestants to come to confession, and they sent into every household, who would not obey, a number of these horsemen, whom they had to feed. Every week the number of the soldiers was doubled, and every violence was allowed, so that the Protestants had only the choice either to be ruined or to become Catholics. Since Silesia had been conquered by Frederick of Prussia, the Protestant religion became ascendant; but the inhabitants of many towns and districts have lost the recollection of the struggles and sufferings of their forefathers; and they are still subjects of the Pope. The Jesuits, after having established colleges,* tried to establish superstition instead of religion, shaping the form of the morality in the Bible to the support of priestcraft and Popery; and we have still left a considerable number of places where miracles are performed by the holy Virgin, and where thousands of pilgrims seek relief. Even up to the time of my boyhood, I remember that my mother went sometimes to one of these places. My early education was then strictly Catholic, and in the eighth or ninth year of my age I took a leading part in the evening prayers of the family with my mother. My father being a landed proprietor and having a large family, it fell to my lot to mind a small flock, after school-time, in the fields and hills of our small property. I mention this, because it was on its beautiful and sunny hills that I, in my solitary occupation, thought much about religious subjects, about God and eternity; and there it was I first conceived the purpose of renouncing the doctrine of a hell and a personal devil. When I was ten years of age, I was prepared for the first confession and confirmation. In the catechism, we had to learn a sentence which troubled my conscience greatly: it was said that a man who goes to the Lord's Supper without having confessed all his sins to the priest, must fall for ever into the power of the devil, and go to hell. My anxiety increased the nearer the time of the confession came; and although I had prepared myself six weeks previously, I went trembling into the confessional chair, fearing that I should forget one sin, and be lost for ever. But my very great anxiety caused me to forget several things which I considered to be sins. Twice I returned to the priest with trembling heart: when I came the third time, he was annoyed that I gave him so much trouble, and I did not dare to return once more, although I recollected several errors which I had not

* One was at Neisse, which was taken by the Prussian Government and converted into a Government grammar-school or gymnasium, and in this school I was educated in the higher branches of science, during eight years. I left the place in 1836 for the university; and was in 1845 pursued by a fanatic crowd through the town with stones, after a Reform community had been formed.

confessed to him. The consequence was, that I felt thoroughly wretched during many days after, on the solitary hills, with regard to my salvation. The reader will have remarked that not the repentance, but the confession, of the sins to the Catholic priest, is made the condition of salvation, and that the passage of the New Testament is thus corrupted and made serviceable to the Pope and to priestcraft. After much anxiety and doubt, I came to the conclusion, that if I had lost the grace and love of God, I soon should feel the influence of the evil one, by becoming more and more wicked. However, as I found no alteration in my soul, as my mother's love shone just as bright upon me as before, and my parents and teachers were even more satisfied with my conduct, I began to doubt, and then to deny, the whole doctrine of hell; so that the belief of a dualistic power in the universe, upon which the priest-churches rest, was in the way to be shaken altogether. But having no one to give me some higher notions, and obliged to keep the matter to myself, it rested till I was in the grammar-school, listening with delight to the information given to us about the heavenly bodies and the immensity and eternity of the universe. The professor expressed once the opinion, that the numerous stars which we see at night, being mostly larger than our globe, were very likely inhabited. This remark led me to doubt the dogma of the Trinity; for I thought, what a narrow-minded conception is it to believe, that a God who has created such a vast universe, would have created men so imperfect as to send afterwards his Son on our little planet to improve his Father's work! In the grammar-school, the lessons were so laborious and often so mechanical, that little time was left for independent study, and thus the final struggle and the solution of these and other doubts was left till I studied theology in the university and came into the Catholic seminary.

In 1836, I passed the examination for the university, and the question arose, what sphere of life would be most suitable to my abilities and individuality, and would be useful to others. I found, after a sincere examination of myself, that I could do best by becoming a preacher and addressing the people. For this I felt an inclination, when all the other branches of learned occupation appeared to me cold and mechanical. "But how will you be able to pursue your ideals of liberty and humanity from the pulpit of the Catholic Church?" said my friends of the university. I replied to them, I see no other path than this; and if the Catholic priesthood will not allow me to preach as I find it necessary, I will go my own way. This was the light which appeared in my soul at the time of my decision for my future sphere of life; and although it sometimes only shone dimly, it has led me through all the difficulties which soon arose in my path.

This idea of my future sphere of action had at this period

more the form of instinctive feeling or presentiment than of clear consciousness; for I little knew the structure of the Catholic hierarchy and their practices. The first years in a German university are the most happy for a youth who will study; for he has full liberty to study what he likes best, and go to any professor. I belonged to the national party, and we used to study and discuss the works of the most eminent poets of all nations, as well as some of our philosophers. Schiller and Shakespear were our highest ideals. The former nourished a noble enthusiasm for liberty and virtue, and the latter fascinated us by his genius. Of Hegel's works we studied chiefly the Philosophy of History. From the professors of the Catholic theology I scarcely could learn anything; they wasted the time in words and barren phrases. One of them, for example, tried to find out the birth-place of the evangelist Luke, and during two weeks he kept us about this question; and as he at last did not find anything, I put my pen and inkstand in my pocket, and never came or listened again, but employed my time better. In 1839, the work of Strauss made a great sensation; but I was too much occupied with my inward struggles to read it. I merely know that it caused a great consternation among our theological professors, and that one tried to disarm him. I knew, besides, at the time, too little of theology to be greatly interested in the question.

A German student lives very much in ideality and theories, and is so much confined to his study and books, that the practical questions of life come late before him—often too late; and this explains why we had many liberal-minded and theoretically advanced men among our officials and professors in 1845 and 1848, but not so many who had the energy to act with manly courage in breaking through that deadening system of the Roman hierarchy and police-craft, by which the government of Manteufel and of his king have disgraced especially Prussia for many years, and by which our Reform communities suffer a kind of persecution which no sensible men would expect in a Protestant country in the 19th century.

In 1839, I passed the theological examination, and entered the Catholic seminary about Christmas of that year. With what feelings I entered this institution, the reader will easily perceive from the state of mind I was in during that period. I felt entirely unsettled; I doubted many dogmas; but I had not yet gained higher notions, and especially had not realized the machinery of the Catholic hierarchy in its inner construction and working. Everything was strange to me; but soon I saw through the whole system, and understood the prelates in their real character. About forty young men shared my lot, and during the first few weeks only three submitted tamely to the prison rules of the College: there were, after two or three months, scarcely three who had resisted the deadening influence of the institution.

One after the other resigned his conscience, his individuality, his liberty, to the Church—a thing of which they were frightened, without knowing what it really was! There was a cowardice and laziness through all degrees of the priests engaged in the cathedral, and among my youthful companions a rude conduct and hypocritical cunning grew stronger every week, so that I became quite alarmed, fearing that it would influence my own character. Every independent opinion was met with the phrase, “The Church says we have to believe it in this or that sense.” In one of our discussions, I asked my antagonists, who used this phrase against me, Who is this Church? I think I am a part of that Church, and have the right to express my opinion also. They looked down and felt that I was right, but their manly courage was gone. The time was lavished away in pious idleness, and every day five hours were spent on Latin prayers, and scarcely two hours left for study. In order to gain time, I rose in the morning at 4 or 4½ o’clock, but was obliged to sit in the cold room, as no fire was allowed so early. Now I began to examine the clerical rules, the dogmas and their effects; and during the time the others were repeating the Latin prayers, I studied all kinds of works, containing often the most opposite opinions, in order to form my own in these matters. For example, I went through the works of a Catholic priest of the name of Günther, who tried to prove the Church dogmas philosophically (this work was last year put into the Roman Index as dangerous), and then took up Kant’s work, Critic of Pure Reason (*Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*). By comparing the contradictions of theology and examining the slavish life around me and the inexplicable forms of worship in the cathedral, independent religious notions began to germinate in my soul.

All true and fruitful wisdom must have its source in our heart or in our love, and then re-act upon or cultivate the heart. Soon I was led to inquire into that institution of the Catholic Church which isolates the heart of the Catholic priest from family and from his nation,—I mean *celibacy*. I saw the rich prelates at home, living a friendless, weary life, without the holy ties of family and the refreshing, regenerating love of children. Much was also talked of vices and even secret crimes of certain members of the chapter in the College. The professor of moral doctrines for the young clergy said one day, with regard to celibacy, it is an admitted rule for the clergy, If not caste then caute.

I had naturally a long time thought about celibacy and the principle of family life, and could not bring into harmony my deep love and reverence for my parents with the doctrine of celibacy, which was taught to be higher than family life. Now, this Jesuitic, dark and unmanly rule which I heard, and all that I had seen of priest-life, induced me to enter more deeply into the matter, and to ask for the divine source of matrimonial life,

or better for the confirmation of my idea about it. This I found in Dante's *Divina Comedia*, and I never can forget the joy I felt when I read the sentence that, by true love and harmony of heart and soul between husband and wife, both can arrive at higher love to God and truer wisdom; and I exclaimed, What an elevated family life and what exalted thoughts may grow out of this principle! This idea opened more and more my eyes to see the relation which men bear to God. But I stood quite alone among a bigoted priesthood, who would have condemned such an idea as blasphemy; and it required time to ripen my ideas, and especially to see them proved in life and tested by personal experience.

(To be continued.)

ORTHODOXY AND MODERN BIBLICAL LEARNING.*

A NEW work from the pen of the author of the *New Cratylus* and *Jashar*, and from the press of Stephen Austin of Hertford, could hardly make its appearance in the world of letters without causing a certain sensation; and when, in addition to this, Dr. Donaldson has, as the *Spectator* says, "by the publication of this volume, forced into prominence a question of more immediate practical interest than any of the special critical and speculative questions he has hitherto applied his learning and his vigorous intellect to settle," the sensation may naturally be expected to be greater. And it requires little of the spirit of prophecy to predict that this work will exercise a deep and wide-spread influence, and will prove not merely interesting to the members of the Church of England, to which the author belongs, and to whom the work is especially addressed, but to the various Dissenting bodies in the country, and not least to that section of the Christian church whose opinions are represented by the *Christian Reformer*.

For Dr. Donaldson has arrived, by a separate process, at results which Christian Unitarians have maintained as a rule for nearly 200 years. He has by independent thought arrived at ideas respecting the Inspiration of Scripture and the personality of the Spirit of Evil, at any rate, coinciding precisely with those which we maintain: and although he differs in many points from our expressed opinions, he maintains in their integrity the great principles upon which those opinions have been formed.

The work under consideration consists of a theological essay,

* Christian Orthodoxy reconciled with the Conclusions of Modern Biblical Learning. A Theological Essay, &c. By J. W. Donaldson, D.D., late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Williams and Norgate.

in five chapters, with an appendix (and sometimes two or three) added to each chapter. The essay is, however, complete in itself; and each of the appendices may, as he says, be considered as a separate essay on a special point of criticism. The five chapters treat respectively of "The Characteristics and Qualifications of the Christian Advocate," with an appendix; "The Laws and Objects of a True Defence of the Faith," with an appendix; "The Hypothesis of an Infallible Literature," with four appendices; "The supposed Existence of Intermediate Intelligences," with an appendix; and "The Orthodoxy of a National Church," with an appendix on the so-called Athanasian Creed. The principle on which he proceeds is to shew that there are various points which have been maintained as indispensable to Christian orthodoxy, which Christian orthodoxy is in no respect compelled to maintain; that these points, which have been proved at variance with recent biblical criticism, should be given up as untenable; and that the essentials which biblical criticism upholds are of such a nature that all good Christians and good citizens can accept and support them. It will be convenient for our purpose to consider the former of these positions, the points which biblical criticism rejects as untenable, and which comprise the subjects of the first four chapters, first; and then to consider the last chapter and its appendix separately, in which the conditions requisite for Christian orthodoxy are laid down.

With the spirit of these first four chapters every Unitarian can heartily agree. The special points he selects as untenable are the hypothesis of an infallible literature, or the literal inspiration of Scripture, and the hypothesis of intermediate intelligences, or of a personal devil; and his ideas as to the true duty of a Christian advocate are such as we can fully endorse. He complains, at the very commencement, of the mistaken notion which has been held as to our duty as Christian warriors, that instead of combating infidelity and sin, "we find practically that the great battle-field of the disciples of Jesus Christ is the Church itself, and the combatants those who sincerely believe themselves the true followers of the Redeemer. When we talk of polemical theology, or the warfare of religious controversy, we do not allude to hostilities carried on between belief and infidelity, but to the unceasing conflicts between the different manifestations of religious dogmatism." And a little further on, "In this mistaken view of our duties as Christian warriors, we overlook all that is essential to our position as reasonable creatures and as believers in a revealed religion."—"It is highly needful then that timid and zealous believers should be told from time to time what it is that the advocate of Christianity is called on to maintain, and what principles ought to regulate our defence of the faith." And at p. 8, he gives the key-note and, as it were, the substance of his essay, which we think it only fair to give in his own words:

"Influenced by these general considerations, we have undertaken to shew at length, in the following pages, that the proper functions of the advocate of Christianity are those which we have briefly described; that conservatism, or the maintenance of established views and principles, has its laws and objects, its limitations and conditions, when it represents the apologetics of Christianity, no less than when it professes to uphold an existing constitution in Church and State; that this true conservatism presumes a timely relinquishment of the untenable; that there are two dogmas most especially rejected by learning and common sense, so that by their maintenance the conservatism of orthodoxy is signally imperilled in these latter days; and that Christian orthodoxy in general, and our national orthodoxy in particular, are the same now as they were when Jesus accepted with a blessing the confession made by Peter, or when John gave the original definition of Antichrist."

And he proceeds preliminarily to establish the three following positions (p. 9):

"a. That the real battle-field of the soldier of Christ is his own heart; his real enemies, the lusts which war in his members. b. That in regard to the conquest or conversion of the world, the Christian champion must vindicate his cause by his conduct. c. That the weapon of the Christian warrior is the sword of the spirit, or the Word of God in its naked essentials, and not the scabbard of human opinions, by which it is concealed."

These positions he proceeds to prove; and in reference to the third, has some extremely pertinent remarks respecting the two forms of religion, which he calls the religion *ab extra*, of which the rule is *credo firmiter, pecco fortiter*, and the religion *ab intra*, whose rule is *credo quam maxime, pecco quam minime*. The points which he finds fault with in Christianity he attributes to the spread of this religion *ab extra*; and he refers to Dr. Whichcot (*latitudinarian* as he was called by his opponents) as distinguished in a former age for endeavouring to restore to the Church of England the real religion *ab intra*. The result of all this is, that (p. 36) "the Christian's first duty is to conquer the sinful tendencies of his own carnal nature, because religious life consists in a triumph of the spirit over the flesh;" and that (p. 37) "we can have no hesitation in saying that Christianity is a rule of life, and not a set of speculative opinions."

Pursuing the argument, he maintains "that the true conservative and the true defender of the faith, he who really wishes to maintain what is tenable and essential in existing systems of government and theology, must be prepared from time to time to relinquish what he feels or finds to be untenable and unessential,"—stigmatizes the Act of Conformity as a "result of the triumph of Priestcraft over Protestantism,"—and proposes, as "reforms which seem to be desirable, (1) an abridgment of the Prayer Book; (2) a new edition of the Articles; (3) a corrected version of the Bible." Specially in the Articles he proposes to

omit seven Articles—the 3rd, 13th, 17th, 18th, 33rd, 35th, 36th, and to combine Articles 28, 29 and 30, into one statement (p. 89). On the revision of the Bible he uses even stronger language than we are ourselves accustomed to. He says, for instance (p. 90), “If there was no reason for this good work beyond that which is alleged as the chief objection to it,—namely, that it would shake the common people’s unthinking idolatry of the sacred volume, which is known to them only in the Established Version,—this reason alone would be quite sufficient to recommend that revision which the Bibliolaters so earnestly deprecate.” And (p. 95), “Under these circumstances (*viz.* the increase of biblical knowledge and critical acquaintance with MSS.), who is the true conservative? Is it the patcher of obsolete vestments, the user of worn-out wine-skins, who would destroy the old garment and lose all the wine, rather than abandon his antiquated costume and his superannuated vehicle? Is it he who maintains that religion must stand or fall with that which science has proclaimed to be childish credulity? or he who will not make the life of religion dependent on its outward shell? who meets science half-way, and while he admits that the untenable is not to be maintained, proves to the satisfaction of all reasonable men that the truth of religion is not in the slightest degree affected by the rejection of any irrational hypothesis or tradition.” In immediate connection with this, he meets and disposes of the infidel’s objection respecting certain doctrines which have connected themselves with the teaching of Christianity—1, that they are false or erroneous; 2, that they are inseparable from Christianity—by conceding “the errors of the teachers of religion, but then joining battle with the opponents on the other proposition, that Christianity is answerable for these errors or endangered by their overthrow;”—and, after quoting with approval Professor Norton on the subject, proceeds to prove the two positions (p. 99): “1. That there are certain truths, essential to the establishment of Christianity as a revelation from God, which are unaffected by the result of the controversies between the defenders and the impugnors of our faith. 2. That the dogmas supposed to be connected with religion, which the results of the conflict between the advocates and the enemies of Christianity have proved to be untenable, are not among the truths which are essential to the establishment of our faith; that, in fact, they are immaterial as well as indefensible.” The first point he proves by the usual arguments; and in reference to the second he arrives at the conclusion (p. 123): “A little reflection will convince us that all the difficulties by which the defence of Christianity has been impeded have arisen from the maintenance, by our teachers and advocates, of two specific opinions: (1) that every statement in the Scripture is inspired and infallibly true; and (2) that Christianity has made itself responsible, not only for the truth of

Judaism, to which we attribute an authority scarcely less divine than that of Christianity itself, but also for a belief in good and bad angels, which is clearly traceable to a human origin:" and he then proceeds to shew in two separate chapters, "that these two erroneous assumptions—the latter of which is a mere offshoot from the former—are not only indefensible in themselves, but also unessential as theological dogmas, and not included among the elements of Christian orthodoxy."

The arguments in Dr. Donaldson's third chapter will not present to our readers any especially new point, though no doubt to those to whom they are immediately addressed, the line he takes will present many new features. Some of his expressions will seem even to Unitarians to be very strong—as when he says (p. 153), "The hypothesis of an infallible literature, which has assumed the form of the most degrading idolatry that ever enslaved the reasonable soul of man." The results to which he arrives in some cases go beyond what even Unitarians have maintained respecting the origin of the Canon of Scripture. He says, speaking of the Old Testament, "that the existing miscellany contains no book which in its present state is older than the reign of David and Solomon"—"that with the exception of the majority of the Prophets and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, no author's name can be fixed with anything like certainty" (p. 160)—and elsewhere, that the only book even claimed for Moses is the book of Deuteronomy. Again (pp. 163, 164), "All scholars can convince themselves that the cosmogony and the history of the fall of man are a pragmatistical translation of deep philosophical or religious symbolism"—and, "Glaring discrepancies in the statement of facts, dates and places, and all the usual apparatus of difficulties suggested by ancient writings, might be adduced to invalidate the hypothesis of literal and verbal infallibility"—and, "Nor would the same process fail in its application to the New Testament." He then proceeds to shew by the usual arguments, that "the question of inspiration is of dogmatic, not of historical, import" (p. 165); defines the epithet "inspired," as referring in Scripture "to the subject matter, and not to the mode of composition;" and explains, that "to say, in any intelligible sense of the term, that the Scripture is inspired, is the same as saying that it is the Word of God; . . . that it contains or includes the true revelation of God's will; that it is a properly authenticated record of His holy communications; that it is a memorial wherein His declarations respecting Himself are explained and preserved." "This is the only doctrine of inspiration which is sincerely entertained by religious and reasonable men" (p. 178). And, "To say nothing of the inapplicable and virtually heterodox reference to the two natures of Christ, it is obvious that the Bible cannot be at once the Word of God and the word of man, in any sense, except that

which has been already given; namely, that it is the word of man in reference to its literary composition and authorship, and the Word of God in reference to those divine communications of which it is the only authentic record." The remainder of the chapter shews that this is the view taken of the subject by the Church of England in her Articles and her Liturgy. The appendices to this chapter are especially interesting to the biblical student: one, "On the Origin and Growth of the Jewish Collection of Sacred Books," containing, among other matters, a long reference to the Book of Jashar; a second, "On the peculiar Character and mutual Connection of the Four Gospels;" another, "On the Dynamical Theory of Inspiration," directed mainly against Mr. Lee's book on the subject; and a fourth, "On the Unchristian Spirit of Bibliolatry," specially directed against the *Record*.

The last of the first four chapters treats of the supposed existence of intermediate intelligences, and in particular controverts the opinions commonly considered orthodox respecting a personal devil. To us it contains nothing new, and need not be more particularly referred to. The appendix to this chapter, "On a recent Attempt to establish the Personality of abstract Evil," is directed against a sermon by Dr. C. J. Vaughan, of Harrow School. It is not much to say that Dr. Donaldson triumphantly establishes his position respecting the non-existence of a purely spiritual being in whom sin exists, or that such a being can cause sin in us.

This chapter concludes the first part of Dr. Donaldson's essay; and so far, as it seems to us, Unitarians can cordially and heartily agree with his general positions. It is a pity that such agreement must cease here; for we shall see that Dr. D.'s definition of Christianity completely excludes Unitarians from the number of Christians. It will, however, be well worth while examining this last chapter and its appendix separately, as we think it can be clearly shewn to the satisfaction of reasonable men, to whom the Dr. addresses himself, that in this very limitation he acts contrary to one of his own expressed principles; and not only so, but that in defining more exactly his conditions of orthodoxy, he comes so near Unitarian views, that the difference is hardly appreciable. And it may be noticed, that although Dr. Donaldson belongs to a section of the Church possibly not the most influential at the present day, yet he has found support for his views in other quarters; for the Examiner of Feb. 28, 1857, says, "the views stated in it are, as to doctrine, those of the Church of England most distinctly."

He conceives it to be desirable, before concluding the essay, "to take a larger and a wider view of the relations which connect the orthodoxy of all Christians with that of the Church of England, and that we should inquire whether there is anything

in this distinctive position of our National Establishment which would prevent any good Christian and good citizen from entering into communion with us." In other words, he thinks it desirable to make apparent, after broaching opinions which many would consider heterodox, that he is himself orthodox, to make a public profession of faith, and to connect himself definitely with the National Church. After defining *orthodoxy* as "a particular class of opinions regulated by some authority or standard of appeal," and "its opposite *heterodoxy* or more generally *allodoxy*," as "opinions which, tried by the same standard, are different, and *therefore wrong or erroneous*," he proceeds to "derive a full and explicit definition of Christian orthodoxy from the confession of St. Peter, compared with St. John's description of Antichrist. The former tells us what orthodoxy is, the latter warns us against what it is not" (p. 404). The definition is derived from Matt. xvi. 13, sqq., and consists in the answer of Peter, for himself and his fellow-apostles, to our Lord's question, "Whom say ye that I am?"—namely, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Hence, according to all the principles of the case, all men who could answer in the same way as Peter, are orthodox. But, unfortunately, it is necessary for Dr. Donaldson's case, not merely that all men should make the confession in the words of Peter, but that they should *understand the words in Dr. Donaldson's sense*: in other words, he admits and requires here, not merely the word of God, which is the sword of the spirit, but the interpretations of men, which are the scabbard. For he says (p. 405), this "was clearly a declaration of our Lord's divinity, involving a belief in that atonement which it was his work on earth to effect." It should be sufficient for Dr. Donaldson to maintain that those who accept Peter's confession are orthodox; but it is necessary to his Church-of-Englandism that he should do violence to his own expressed opinions by requiring the confession *as he and the Church understand it*. "St. Peter's profession," he says (p. 407), "is the foundation of Christianity"—not absolutely—oh no!—but "*because it contains the recognition of the divine nature in Jesus Christ*." What is this but an avoidance of his own principle when he has only to contend with a small sect, whom as a sect he ignores, but one of whom, Professor Andrews Norton, he knows very well, and quotes often in the body of his work? St. John's definition of Antichrist (as found in 1 John iv. 2, 3; 1 John ii. 22, 23; 2 John 7) is represented as a personification of those who maintained the opinion of the Docetes, that Jesus was not also actually man. His resumé of the points is found at p. 409:

"Here then we have a complete criterion of Christian orthodoxy. Positively and as the starting-point in our acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, we must declare with Peter, that he is the Son of the living God, and therefore a divine person. Negatively, and as a safe-

guard against the prevalent error of professing Christians, we must stigmatize as Antichrist all those who will not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, all those who do not fully admit his absolute humanity."

We may just remark, in passing, that in this scheme of Christian orthodoxy, which the Examiner vouches for as being sound Church-of-England doctrine, there is no hint of or reference to a *Trinity* in any form; but we shall find presently that the Dr. considers this definition to include that dogma, which he professes to be *the only dogma* which the Church of England teaches definitely. But it is impossible not to see that this interpretation of the definition of Antichrist has a very clear reference here. It was an essential point of his argument in a former portion of his work, that our Lord was *peccable*; that he was, quâ his humanity, perfect man; and hence the importance attached to this point here.

Further on in the chapter we have the following very emphatic statement (p. 412):—"in other words, that this alone is necessary to everlasting salvation—that we believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and live in accordance with that belief." Practical goodness of life and newness of heart he always consistently insists on throughout. "Christianity is the abnegation of self." "The greatest injuries which have been done to our religion, have proceeded from selfish dogmatism." "It is clear that the true and earnest believer can only be religious according to his own convictions. It would therefore be the height of absurdity, if a national church which professes to be co-extensive with the secular government, did not open its doors to all true Christians in the nation" (pp. 413, 414). "In accordance with these general principles, we venture to maintain that a national church ought not to be saddled with any obsolete provisions or local enactments which would close its doors against a good Christian and a good citizen, enlightened by the civilization of the age; but that national orthodoxy must be *as wide as personal religiousness*, and that the national communion must be prepared to receive every subject of this realm who 'confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh'" (p. 418). And how dare Dr. Donaldson, in the face of such statements as these, limit the personal religiousness of a nation to its belief in his interpretation of Peter's words cited in Matthew? How dare he, in the face of such opinions, offer such a gratuitous insult to the Unitarian denomination, certainly not the least enlightened of the present age, as to deliberately exclude them from his category of "good Christians and good citizens"? How dare he maintain that the Church of England acts up to this principle, when he allows that the first four Articles contain "an explicit profession of belief in the *Holy Trinity*," of which we now hear for the first time? Verily, Dr. Donaldson does not appear to have followed the advice of Mr. Rowland Williams, which he praises in the note at p. 415: "The question, *how far we could go*, is best

answered by experience. *Only it never will be safe to stop short of the truth.*" He has gone as far as he can go within the pale of the Church of England: the question yet remains, whether the truth be not outside that pale, even as he defines the limit.

But we have not yet quite done with Dr. Donaldson's orthodoxy. According to his opinion of the Catechism and the Articles, "Mr. Maskell was justified in saying to the Archbishop of Canterbury, that the Church of England has no precise teaching, except on the doctrine of the Trinity." He says further on, "that there is no doctrine, except that of the Holy Trinity, which is entitled to be called at once catholic and distinctive" (p. 423). "A belief in the Trinity was *from the first the indispensable preliminary* to a man's admission into the Church of Christ" (p. 425). We need not delay longer on this subject than to say that if this is really all that the Church of England teaches, many men have been grievously in error as to that Church's teachings even to this day. But we must pass on to see how Dr. Donaldson understands this "one thing needful," this single doctrine taught by the Church of England. Either Dr. Donaldson gives us the authoritative teaching of the Church on the point, as we presume he is orthodox, or he gives us his own; but the latter case is almost excluded, from the dogmatic way in which he wishes us all to receive his definition of Peter's confession; and if he merely insists on his own interpretation being received, how is he better than Dr. Vaughan, or Dr. M'Caul, or Mr. Perowne, or others who appear to him thus to offend?—nay, how is he superior even to the *Record*, which he so fiercely assails for insisting on its opinions? The definition occurs in his appendix to this chapter, "On the Athanasian Creed." At p. 471, after stating that "there are three means or intervening propositions between that kind of Unitarianism which we call Deism" (if we can properly understand the other kind of Unitarianism, he means Trinitarianism; for he seems completely to ignore what *we* call Unitarianism) "and the Tritheism which is a kind of Polytheism," he gives the following scheme of these five positions:—"Tritheism: a belief in three Gods; i. e. three minds or substances all equal. Arianism: a division of the substance of God, without a recognition of more than one equal God. Sabellianism: a confusion of the persons in the one substance of God. Trinitarianism: a recognition of the unity of substance, which insists on a separation or diversity of persons. Unitarianism or Deism: a denial of any sub-manifestations in the unity of the Godhead." He then says further, "With regard to the Trinitarian, everything depends on the meaning of the word *person*;" and immediately afterwards, "We who profess the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity, believe in one Divine Mind or Godhead; and in this one Godhead we declare that there are three Persons or manifestations—the Father or Goodness, the Son or Wisdom, and the Holy Ghost or Power

—existing side by side before all worlds.” Again, “that *as attributes or agencies*, the three Divine Persons are anterior to the world and independent of it.” And in reply to the objection that this is Sabellianism, he quotes Hooker (Eccles. Polit., v. clv. 5, p. 317, Keble) and Calvin in his Catechism (quoted by Archinard, u. s.). Hooker says (p. 472), “The Father as Goodness, the Son as Wisdom, and the Holy Ghost as Power, do all concur in every outward particular issuing from that one only glorious Deity which they all are. For that which moveth God to work is Goodness, and that which ordereth his work is Wisdom, and that which perfecteth his work is Power.” And Calvin says, “*M. Vu qu’il n’y a qu’un Dieu, qui te meut de réciter le Père, le Fils et le Saint Esprit, qui sont trois? E. Parcequ’en une seule essence divine nous avons à considérer le Père, comme le commencement et l’origine ou la cause première de toutes choses: puis après le Fils, qui est la sagesse éternelle; le Saint Esprit, qui est la vertu et puissance, laquelle est épandue sur toutes créatures, et néanmoins réside toujours en lui.*” Is this really and truly the orthodox doctrine of the Church of England, that the Son and the Spirit are merely *persons* in the sense of *attributes or manifestations*? Is this the meaning of the phrase that the Son is “God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God”? Or does this accord with the opinions of the Rev. Mr. Guinness, who is presumed to be orthodox on this point, as quoted in the “Inquirer” of Feb. 6, 1858, where the Son of God is said to be “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality”? If these things are so, it is time Unitarians were more fully and definitely informed of the fact; for it could not but be agreeable to us, as a section of the Christian Church, to find that our opinions, which have been considered peculiar and deistical, are in fact the orthodox teachings of the Church of England.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that Dr. Donaldson may be still in a state of transition, and may in time adopt the *name* as well as the *profession of faith* of Unitarians. In the mean time we thank him heartily for his learned and valuable contribution towards a better and truer comprehension of the words of Scripture; for his able and powerful maintenance of the great principles of Protestantism and free inquiry; and for his truly Christian views respecting the duty and necessity of Christian practice justifying Christian profession. Such men as Dr. Donaldson may indeed be considered as the heralds of a new era; and it is in the full and confident hope that the seed he has sown may bring forth much fruit, that we take leave of the accomplished author and his interesting and valuable work on the true principles of Christian Orthodoxy.

Sc.

POPULAR PREACHING.

It is impossible that any one who is interested either in the progress of practical Christianity, or in that of the moral and intellectual character of the lower classes among the English people, can watch without deep anxiety the effort that is now being made to unite these two great currents, and induce them to flow on henceforward in the same channel. Till within the last few months there seemed serious danger that this could never be; it seemed as if all the probabilities of the case were pointing quite the other way; that the religion of the country and the great masses of the people of the country were establishing a permanent separation,—religion going on its way, and the people going on theirs. It was evident that if these roads were to be permanently separate, they would be something more than separate—they would be perpetually *divergent*; as years rolled on they would be farther and farther distant from each other, and the religious element of society would no longer have any existence or recognition among its masses. How such a melancholy result could be avoided was to many thoughtful minds the great problem of the day. It was plain that either society or religion were out of joint; that there was some difficulty or misunderstanding between them not yet explained; that, whatever it might be, something was wrong somewhere. Either religion itself was not acceptable to the people, or the form and manner of presenting it to the popular mind was not acceptable. It was all-important to ascertain in which of these two lay the real difficulty. It was important to know whether, on the one hand, the people either *repudiated* religion altogether, or were utterly indifferent to it; or whether, on the other hand, the form in which it was presented was objectionable, or access to the temple not easy. Till this question was decided, no one knew towards what point his efforts should be directed. On one supposition, the case seemed almost hopeless; on the other, it was very far from being so. Which supposition were the true one, it was therefore of the first importance to discover.

Several earnest men, having in them something of the true spirit of the apostles, men of no small powers, energy and zeal, had already started upon the voyage of discovery. Mr. Spurgeon at length seemed to have opened the North-west passage. He, as well as some other contemporaneous explorers, found that there *was* a passage. He found that the people, under certain conditions, *would* come, *would* listen—would come again, and listen with attention and earnestness—with every indication of sincere interest and deep conviction. What exactly those conditions were, it was not perhaps at first very easy with certainty to say. But in some way or other it was evident they were

included and fulfilled by his mode, plan or manner of address. Wherein was the attraction? was the question asked by all the scribes and the elders. It might be the novel style of his address; but this after a time ceased to be novel. It might be the striking accompaniments, the spectacle of such a multitude listening in silent attention to the sound of one human voice. But how came that multitude there? It might be the immense hall he preached in; but he preached in that hall because no other would contain his congregation. It might be that he made religion both interesting and intelligible, when with others it had been a craft and a mystery; and if so, it looked as if the previous fault had not been so much in the people as in those who had undertaken their instruction. It might be that Surrey Gardens were open to the world—to the great, vulgar public—while the Churches were open only to the *religious public*, and were guarded by fabled monsters, blue-coated beadles, and mysterious pew-openers. Whatever might be the cause, *the fact was so*, that thousands upon thousands, Sunday after Sunday, thronged round the pulpit of the new apostle, and not only *came*, not only sat and listened in decorous silence, but with deep attention, and in many instances—very many—with every sign of strong emotion. They were evidently not only enjoying a spectacle, but receiving an impression and experiencing a feeling. It was impossible to attend those services, and observe the countenance and demeanour of the congregation, without being convinced that many individuals in that vast assembly would carry away something, and that that something would be remembered during the week, and would bring them there again on the ensuing sabbath. There was no denying, there was no doubting, that all this indicated a movement having a real foundation, pointing to a strong fact, and likely to be attended by substantial consequences.

At length public attention was awakened. Clergymen of the Established Church recognized the phenomenon and saw the possible results. The ice seemed to have opened; the impassable barrier to have been broken through; a practicable breach made. Without any of that miserable pride and jealousy which refuses to follow because inferior men have led, they began to say one to another, “If Mr. Spurgeon can do this, why can’t *we*? It is plain the people are accessible: why should not *we* reach them too, and bring at least a large share of these wandering sheep into our own fold? Why should we go on spending our strength for nought, and preaching to empty pews and ‘dearly beloved Roger,’ while this man is drawing round him thousands of earnest, eager listeners, men and women hungering and thirsting for the food he brings them? If the mountain won’t come to Mahomet, let Mahomet go to the mountain; and if our present services don’t attract the people, let us try some that shall.” Hence the spectacle that we are now witnessing in London. The

highest dignitaries of the Church are coming forth from their palaces, colleges and cathedrals, and are going out into the highways and hedges to gather in the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And they do not go forth in vain. Multitudes, to be reckoned by thousands, advance to meet them: churches which before could scarcely collect a decent congregation, are now crowded to overflowing; and the preacher who had to waste his strength and learning upon a group of cold, unimpressible respectables, now finds himself addressing a vast assembly of eager, attentive and grateful worshippers. Nor is it only in the Church—nor is it only in London, that the same experiment is going on. In Liverpool, Mr. Stowell Brown had a considerable precedence of Mr. Spurgeon. He has been lecturing for some years on the Sunday afternoons to very large and increasing audiences, composed almost entirely of the labouring classes, or of those but little higher on the social ladder; and if strong common sense, sound doctrine, an earnest, apostolic spirit, and a style of genuine Saxon English, which as you read it sounds like the music of healthy breezes—if all these can attract, instruct and purify an audience, we do not wonder that the Concert Hall of Liverpool has been found too small to contain even the half of the vast multitude which have thronged to listen to the teacher. In Manchester, too, Mr. Arthur Mursell, though offering very inferior fare, has attracted to the Free-Trade Hall still larger audiences than Mr. S. Brown; and in some other towns or districts—Dublin, for instance, and the Potteries—similarly large, attentive and earnest congregations have been drawn, not once or twice, but Sunday after Sunday, for many successive months, to listen to the exhortations and instruction of some favourite preacher, who by one means or by another—not perhaps always the same—has gained entrance to their hearts or understandings.

Such is the broad fact that we are now witnessing. Probably the same thing may be going on elsewhere, though we ourselves do not happen to have heard of it. Now what is the explanation of this fact? Whence comes it that such multitudes are so attracted to listen to words that concern their souls' good? Is it the mere novelty of the thing? Is it the eloquence of the speaker? Is it clap-trap for the multitude? Is it a pandering to the low taste of the low? The facts before us will support none of these suppositions. Or is it a felt want among the people themselves, which these new apostles in some degree supply, or it is hoped *may* supply? Is it something of the same feeling that led many, both Jews and Gentiles, into the wilderness of the Jordan to listen to the preaching of the Baptist? Is it that the people feel the want of religion, though they do not know how to interpret that feeling, or by what name to call that want? We have such faith in humanity, and in the existence of the religious instinct as a part of it, as to adopt rather the latter inter-

pretation. We have seen something of the class of men chiefly affected by this new movement, and we have a strong conviction that it is not hatred to religion that makes them turn away from it, but a feeling of utter distaste, and a suspicion of utter hollowness and unreality in all they see of the forms and outward garb in which it presents itself to their view. They turn away from the church door, not because RELIGION is there, within that solemn pile, but because what they see there seems to them *not* to be religion, but to be the very opposite of all that religion must be, if indeed it is what the believers in it say it is. They look upon the clergyman with an evil eye, because they think they see there, not a man, but a priest, and the very name of a priest is altogether hateful to them. They could not tell you *why*, perhaps; or, if they did, their reason might be nonsense, or founded on a phantom. Nevertheless, the feeling of strong aversion is *there*, and does its evil work. But let that priest cast off his garments, and his priesthood, and his phraseology, and address them as *a man*, and talk plain English, about plain things, about daily affairs, about facts, and deeds, and transactions that come before them in their daily life, and then these men will listen; and if afterwards, when he has gained the ear, not of his presumed inferiors, but of his fellow-men, he will gradually go on to speak of religion in the same plain, common-sense way, and in the same intelligible English, and leave all the peculiar phraseology of the pulpit locked up in his home study, we believe he will find these men still continuing to listen, even though their thoughts are lifted towards Infinity, and their eye directed onwards towards Eternity.

It is melancholy to contemplate the present spiritual condition of a very large portion of our operative classes, and that too often the best portion of them. They are men of no mean intellectual capacity, and whose powers of thought are well worthy of some wider field than any through which they have yet wandered. Neither is the moral sense by any means dead within them. On the contrary, of their own code of morality, such as it is, they are often rigid observers. But they walk by their own light, and in the sight of their own eyes. Their eye is not lifted upwards, nor is it fixed on any steady guiding star. All is darkness round them, and they feel that it is darkness. Their thoughts brood in the shade, and they are given to moot hard questions, and propose for solution insoluble problems; and instead of seeking honestly for light, rather to make themselves and others believe that light *is not*. In the waters of the well they draw from there is indeed often a considerable element of truth, but it is so mingled with error and *half* truth, that it were better almost to be unmitigated falsehood. These men are thought to be the enemies of religion; they think themselves so; but very often we believe that they are rather strangers than

enemies. They do indeed hate and despise that which they have seen, or that which they have imagined; but they have seen only the outside of the temple, and they have taken it for a sepulchre. But there is nothing in *the thing itself* which to many of these minds would be repulsive, if it were not presented to them in a manner and in a garb that was repulsive. How far that garb and manner should be fashioned to their fancy, may be a question open to consideration; but if these men, and such as they, be worth winning, we believe they may be won. Their religion, indeed, if they adopted any, might not be of the kind that would suit the taste, or supply the wants, of University divines or cultivated intellects generally; but it might be a religion that would perform the functions of religion, in a rough, imperfect way perhaps, to a rough, uncultivated people. The laws and manners and morality of civilization are not the laws, manners and morality of the backwoods; but it is better that these remote settlements should have the benefit of such things *in some form*, rough and rude though it may be, rather than be without them altogether. And so with the religion of the masses. We must not require them to adopt our form of religion, if, from any cause whatever, reasonable or unreasonable as it may seem to us, that form may be to them objectionable. The first step, and the great one, is to get them to allow it access to their minds at all, under *any* form or *any* development which shall still leave it *religion*. We have then some material to work upon, and some weapon to work with. We may afterwards improve, refine and elevate our tone and treatment, as opportunity and circumstance allow. In the mean time, let us beware how we think or speak disparagingly of the men who are doing this work; doing what others, perhaps intellectually and by education their superiors, could not do. We must remember that we want rough men to render rough service, and we must not require the edge and polish of the razor in the broad axe of the pioneer. A backwoods-man in the backwoods is a more useful member of society than a divine from Oxford, if he were in the backwoods too, because the former is in his right place, and his hand is fitted to his work. If you reject all allies in a good cause but the refined and educated, you will often reject the only men who can do what is wanted to be done. You reject the pioneers of freedom, often even the pioneers of truth. You must take men as you find them; and if you find them at a good work, it is not well to turn away contemptuously because they don't dress, and think, and talk as you do; but as you pass on your way, say, "God speed you!"—or rather, don't pass on your way at all, but stop, and lend a hand to help them, though it be but to trundle a barrow or wield a pickaxe. These very men you despise are fellow-workers with you. Like you, only in their own way, they are doing God's work and man's. They are the

navvies of civilization and religion, as they have so often heretofore been the navvies of freedom. They do the rough work of society, and then *you* come in to finish and polish off their labours.

Thus it is very possible that you or we may not admire the style and manner in which this man or that man addresses the multitudes who throng around to listen to him; but if he makes them listen—if he opens their eyes—if he touches their hearts—if he wakens them from the deep slumber of the soul—if he makes them feel that they are on the wrong road to happiness, and that he can shew them the right road;—if he can make a drunken man into a sober one, a brutal husband into a kind one, a dark fireside into a bright one,—then, we say, he has done his work; and unless we can do the same work better, it is not for us to throw stones either at him or at his mode of doing it.

But would you have *us*, then, preach like these men? No. Be no copyists of any man. They are strong in their originality: you would be feeble in your imitation. They are strong because they have chosen their own work, and their own way of doing that work; and because, having chosen it, they have thrown their whole strength and hearts into it. Let us do the same: let us throw our whole strength and hearts into our work. Let us fight as those who go in to win; and when we address our fellow-men upon spiritual things, let us not speak as those who are come to preach a sermon, but as those who come to deal with religion as a *reality*, and to speak to the souls of men about something that concerns their souls. Don't imitate these popular orators, but yet take a leaf out of their book. Stoop to conquer;—not so low as to degrade your conquest, or even to hide the pure whiteness of your banner, but so low as to secure the victory and bind the captives. "What is there," we have often heard asked,—“what is there in Unitarianism that prevents it from becoming the religion of the multitude?” Nothing in Unitarianism, but much in Unitarians. We are a cold, reasonable, respectable body; moral, middle-class, few in numbers, comfortable in circumstances, not deficient in education, and by no means overwhelmed with humility at the contemplation of our own shortcomings. It is very doubtful if such a body be good material to work upon, or good material out of which to forge weapons wherewith to work upon others. We fear that while the masses are what *they* are, and we remain what *we* are, they and we shall continue to stand apart from one another. It is a pity; for we should both be improved by approximation. Yet, if there should ever be a close alliance, it will probably be brought about by those who now belong neither to us nor to them. The work will be done by men who have more of the spirit of the apostle than the learning of the scholar; men of a large humanity, of warm sympathies, of generous affections, of untiring zeal; who know more

of men than of books, and have the art, or rather the gift, of speaking to the understandings of the people so as to be apprehended, and of finding the way to their hearts so as to touch and melt—to soften, elevate and purify them. To do this, one quality above all others is absolutely indispensable—*earnestness*. There must be deep convictions, warm desires, a strong sense of the real nature of the subject they are handling, and the real consequences involved in its acceptance or rejection. In short, there must be the old true spirit that burned in the bosoms of prophets and apostles, and afterwards of martyrs and confessors. We cannot light the flame upon the altar of men's souls till we have first kindled it on our own. Fire only can awaken fire. The day is not born of darkness, though it succeeds the night. He who said, "Let there be light," was Himself—LIGHT.

S. G.

BUCKLE'S HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION IN ENGLAND. VOL. I.

THIS is really a wonderful work. Considering the vast extent of reading which it displays, and the familiar acquaintance of the author with many of the most important and difficult subjects which have engaged the attention of the human mind,—the very great number of quotations and references to learned and able works which it contains, all of which quotations are applicable to the subject in hand, from which we may fairly conclude that the references are so likewise,—and that those references, amounting to many hundreds or perhaps thousands, give the volume and page of the works referred to,—it is astonishing that any human memory, or the most industrious registering and indexing of the author's studies, should have enabled him to accomplish such a work. Our wonder, too, is greatly increased when we find that this volume, containing more than 800 pages, is only part of an introduction to the subject, which, it is said, will extend to three volumes, and that the whole work will probably be twelve volumes, and that the author who has engaged in this stupendous task is still a young man. He is probably the only person living who would have ventured to attempt such a work. But learning truly wonderful for its extent, and for the abstruseness of many of the subjects which he handles, is neither Mr. Buckle's only nor his highest praise. The work is written in a perspicuous and nervous style, admirably fitted to philosophical investigation; the reasoning powers of the author are of a very high order; and his arguments, on all matters detached from the great leading principles of his book, will probably be seldom successfully controverted. The work might undoubtedly have been much curtailed without injury to the general argu-

ment; but this could only be done by the omission of those parts which do not add materially to its strength. Mr. Buckle cannot be justly charged with unnecessary diffuseness of style. There is no waste of words; but many of his reasonings and illustrations might be omitted without impairing the strength of his argument. The general view of the author on the subject of his book, the defence and unfolding of which is the object of the whole work, is well expressed in the following words (p. 9): "Every event is linked to its antecedent by an inevitable connection; that such antecedent is connected with a preceding fact; and that thus the whole world forms a necessary chain, in which indeed each man may play his part, but can by no means determine what that part shall be." In a subsequent passage (p. 17) he says, "When we perform an action, we perform it in consequence of some motive or motives; that these motives are the results of some antecedents; and that, therefore, if we were acquainted with the whole of the antecedents, and with all the laws of their movements, we could with unerring certainty predict the whole of their immediate results." These quotations will probably be thought by most readers, who have studied the great metaphysical controversy on Liberty and Necessity, to place the author among the Necessarians, as they seem to concede all that the Necessarians require; but the author will not allow this, for he has said before (p. 12), "Among the more advanced European thinkers there is, however, a growing opinion that both doctrines are wrong, or, at all events, that they have no sufficient evidence of their truth."

Mr. Buckle makes frequent use of the word "law" as regulating all events: as, however, he never refers to a Being who directs and regulates the order of nature, and indeed seems entirely to exclude all reference to Him, it is difficult to affix any other sense to the word than that of inevitable necessity. When we speak of the laws of nature, we usually refer them to the will of a superior Intelligence. Law supposes a lawgiver. If we exclude a superior Being who directs the course of nature, we can give no reason for the fact that there is a succession of events which have hitherto constantly followed each other in regular order, from which we conclude that they will in future continue to do so. This conclusion, where the fact of a regular series of events has occurred for a long time, is universally admitted, although, as Hume long ago observed, we do not arrive at it by any process of reasoning. Mr. Buckle seems to give an authority to what he calls law, which it cannot have unless it be derived from a Being of sufficient power and intelligence to enforce it. The following passage is not easily understood (p. 779): "The doctrine of necessity, a theory which, although often misunderstood, is pregnant with great truths, and is better calculated than any other system to develop the intellect, because

it involves that clear conception of law, the attainment of which is the highest point the human understanding can reach." Agreed, if by law we are to understand the appointment of the Supreme Intelligence, without which there can be no law, properly so called.

This work is sadly disfigured by the dogmatism which pervades every part of it. The author appears to think it impossible that any intelligent person can resist the force of his reasoning or doubt the accuracy of his conclusions. This in a professed admirer of scepticism is extraordinary. The precise meaning affixed by Mr. Buckle to the word *scepticism* is indeed by no means clear, although he inserts a note (p. 327) to explain it, which informs us that it means hardness of belief. But what is that? Does it mean a disposition to refuse assent to facts, of the existence of which there is sufficient evidence, or to reject opinions which appear to be supported by sufficient arguments? This would be a state of mind which would certainly be entitled to no commendation, and would not be likely to lead to any beneficial results. Mr. Buckle is a profound enemy to metaphysics. To that branch of it, however, which consists in an inquiry into the faculties and powers of the human mind, it is not easy to make any valid objection; and, on several occasions, he speaks highly of Locke, and seems to acknowledge the value of the doctrine of the association of ideas, on which subject he refers to Hume and Hartley. He also seems greatly to admire the acuteness of Berkeley, though if he had been duly aware of the excellence of that admirable man's character, to whom Pope, with scarcely an exaggeration, ascribes "every virtue under heaven," he would hardly have written, "Berkeley, in a moment of candour" (p. 151, n.). Whatever may be thought of many of the speculations of the metaphysicians, few who have studied their writings can fail to see that they have thrown much light on the faculties and operations of the human mind, and in particular it may be truly said, that no work points out more justly and forcibly the various sources of error and false and mischievous opinions than Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*. It may well be doubted if any book, since the first promulgation of Christianity, has done more good than that admirable work. Mr. Buckle thinks that moral motives have had "an extremely small influence over the progress of civilization" (p. 113), and for this opinion he gives a reason that nothing new has been discovered in morals for many centuries. It has been well observed, in an able article in the *National Review*, that the good to be expected is not to be derived from discoveries in morals, but from men's characters being influenced and directed by moral principles. Mr. Buckle represents the efforts of philanthropy as short-lived; and he adds that, when philanthropic exertions "take the more durable form of founding great public charities, such

institutions invariably fall first into abuse, then into decay, and after a time are either destroyed or perverted from their original intention" (p. 166). That this is often the case need not be denied, but assuredly it is not so universally. The author will hardly deny that our Hospitals, many of which have existed for ages, have operated largely in relieving and curing diseases; and it would be a bold assertion to say that our Universities and Public Schools, whatever errors and short-comings may be justly charged upon them, have not, on the whole, contributed largely to the advance of civilization. Is a vicious and profligate nation, among whom the distinction of right and wrong is obliterated, to be called civilized, because they understand political economy, and enjoy the advantages of railways, steam vessels and electric telegraphs?

Religion the author leaves quite out of the account in the advancement of civilization. He scarcely mentions it, except in company with assumption of ecclesiastical power, which he justly condemns. Several passages in the book, indeed, shew that he is aware that the Christian religion has been greatly corrupted; but he does not bestow a thought upon the good which would result from men regulating their lives and conduct on the principles of the religion taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles. Sincerity in the profession of religious opinions he appears to think quite unnecessary; and he praises Henry IV. of France for changing his religion from secular motives. His admiration of Gibbon and Voltaire, and especially the latter, is very great. He defends the obnoxious parts of Gibbon, but says nothing in answer to the charge, justly brought against him, of assailing Christianity, not by arguments, but by sneers and insinuations. He says that the original scheme of Christianity was merely to convert the Jews (p. 724, n.), and quotes two texts from the New Testament which merely shew that the personal ministry of Christ, and of his apostles, while he was on earth, was generally confined to that people. The author (p. 559) speaks of "an unceasing struggle between the advocates of inquiry and the advocates of belief," as if it were impossible for those who inquire to believe, and for those who believe to inquire. What is the use and purpose of inquiry, but to enable us to form just and correct opinions, and consequently to believe what shall appear to be supported by sufficient evidence of its credibility?

Government and literature, as well as religion, Mr. Buckle thinks, have little to do with the advance of civilization. "It is evident," he says (p. 232), "that if a people are left entirely to themselves, their religion, their literature and their government, would be, not the causes of their civilization, but the effects of it." Here he leaves entirely out of the account the re-action of religion, government and literature, on the existing state of society. It is undoubtedly true that it is impossible to establish

a rational spiritual religion, a good government, and an enlightened literature, among a nation of savages; but when a nation has attained a sufficient degree of civilization to render it fit to enjoy these inestimable blessings,—good government, a spiritual, rational religion, and a literature embracing the most important subjects of human thought, cannot fail to carry them forward in their career of civilization. Indeed, the author admits (p. 686) that “although political institutions are the consequences, not the causes, of liberty, they do unquestionably re-act upon it.” He says (p. 808) that “after the death of Locke and Newton, there was in England a singular dearth of speculative thinkers;” yet this was the age of Clarke, Berkeley, Butler and Hartley.

This book contains some remarks on individuals, in which probably few of his readers will concur. Tillotson is “one of the dullest of our theologians” (p. 59). This will scarcely be admitted by the few who in the present age are acquainted with his works. The Duke of Marlborough, we are told (p. 183), “had no other idea of politics than to gain the favour of the sovereign by flattering his mistress, to desert the brother of that sovereign at his utmost need, and afterwards, by a double treachery, turn against his next benefactor, and engage in a criminal as well as a foolish correspondence with the very man whom a few years before he had infamously abandoned.” The moral character of the Duke of Marlborough may be chargeable with all that is here said against him; but he assuredly was a man of great political ability. He was the soul of the coalition against Louis XIV., and contributed almost as much by his diplomacy as by his victories to the success of the allies. Neither can it with justice be said that our gratitude and respect for the Duke of Wellington are due solely to his vast military services, as indeed the author himself shews in some further observations on his character in the same page.

Mr. Buckle finds fault with a well-known distinction of lawyers between a sovereign *de facto* and a sovereign *de jure*. A note (p. 377) runs thus: “The old absurdity of *de facto* and *de jure*; as if any man could retain a right to the throne, which the people would not allow him to occupy!” The author quite forgets that in the struggle for sovereignty in our own, as well as in other countries, the people have often had nothing to do with it. Did the people support the usurpation of Stephen and Henry VII., neither of whom had the slightest pretence of a right to the crown? Did the people decide whether Richard II. was rightfully dethroned, and Henry IV. put in his place, or were they ever consulted about it? Did the people elect Oliver or Richard Cromwell Protector? When Warwick drove Edward IV. from his throne, and for a short time restored Henry VI., was it the work of the people? Was Edward the rightful sovereign till he was obliged to fly from his kingdom? Did Henry

then become the legitimate sovereign from that time, and did he forfeit his right when he was conquered by Edward? To avoid answering these difficult questions, the lawyers set up the distinction in question, that whoever should be in possession of the throne should be treated as the sovereign, without which doctrine the affairs of the country would be thrown into confusion, or a civil war must be carried on between the partizans of those who contested the sovereignty.

Finding it impossible to embrace the theory of the author of this most extraordinary work, we nevertheless feel indebted to him for the mass of learning which he has brought together, and for the great ability displayed in the work.

A FRESH ATTEMPT TO RESTORE THE AUTHORITY OF THE HEAVENLY WITNESSES.

THE reader may well be surprised at our heading. Scarcely more surprised would he be were we to announce an attempt to restore the authority of the Ptolemaic system of the universe. Nevertheless, the heading represents a simple fact. "Joseph Turnbull, Ph. D., V.D.M., and late Honorary Secretary of the Anglo-Biblical Institute," has just published "The Seven Epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude, and the Revelation, translated from the Original Greek;"* and to this work he has prefixed "A Dissertation on the Authenticity of 1 John v. 7, 8, respecting the Three Heavenly Witnesses," intended to vindicate the genuineness of the passage. The attempt deserves notice, if only for the singular hardihood it displays in undertaking a task declared to be hopeless by all the great lights of biblical criticism. Before we review the grounds on which Dr. Turnbull rests his defence, we will, for the information of the English reader, mark off the words, the question of whose genuineness is thus once more brought into court:

Verse 7. "For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one;—verse 8. and there are three that bear witness in earth], the spirit and the water and the blood: and these three agree in one."

The spurious words are those which are here included in brackets. And now, that we may not be thought to be influenced by our Unitarian predilections, we cite the decision on the point of the highest English authority, that of Dr. Tregelles, who holds Trinitarian opinions:

"To enter into a formal discussion of the genuineness of the 'testimony of the heavenly witnesses,' 1 John v. 7, is really superfluous; for

* London: Samuel Bagster and Sons.

it would only be doing over again what has been done so repeatedly, that there cannot be two opinions in the minds of those who know the evidence, and are capable of appreciating its force. I only add, that *if* the marked words be considered genuine, any addition of any kind, found in any MS. (however recent), and supported by the later copies of any one version in opposition to the more ancient, possesses as good a claim to be received and used as a portion of Holy Scripture.”*

The reversal of a decision so positive and so emphatic, is, it might be thought, too arduous a task to be undertaken, unless under the encouragement supplied by the discovery of new and strong evidence. No aid of the kind is possessed by Dr. Turnbull, whose sole resources are readiness of belief, breadth of assertion, and the refurbishing of broken, blunted and discarded weapons. His refutation may be accomplished without perplexing the reader with learned minutiae or wearying him by many words. Unable to deny the number or to lessen the weight of the authorities that are against him, our venturesome critic brings into court two respectable witnesses; whose testimony, however, has already been pronounced insufficient for his purpose. “Mill, Bengelius (Bengel), and many others of their calibre, have concluded in favour of the authenticity of the passage.” The “many others of their calibre” is simply a rhetorical ornament, having no corresponding fact, and so no logical value at its back. Mill undoubtedly does give the spurious words in his edition. Their retention he attempts to justify in a long and elaborate essay, in which, after stating the reasons on both sides, he says, “We leave the learned to determine on which side is the preponderance. For myself, while I am ready to learn a better view, if a better and a more certain view shall arise in the future, I confess so much force seems to be in the arguments just adduced in behalf of the authority of this verse, that I can in no way think it ought to be removed from the place it holds.” The decision, if erroneous, displays the care and caution of the true critic. Reserving to himself the right of revising his judgment, and so shewing that his mind was not free from misgiving, the learned editor simply refuses to run his pen over the words, while he abstains from an explicit declaration in favour of their genuineness. Yet this qualified acquiescence in the then received usage, Dr. Turnbull characterizes as “a decisive conclusion in favour of the authenticity of the passage” (pp. ix, x). Having thus made the most of Mill, our critic passes to Bengel. Bengel “concludes as decisively (as Mill) in the same sense.” Bengel’s reason for his “unhesitating conclusion” (p. xi) is found in an allegation that “under the *Disciplina Arcani* introduced into the Church in the second century, the passage as pertaining to the great mystery of the Trinity was intentionally omitted” (pp. x, xi).

* An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament, &c. By S. P. Tregelles, LL.D. London: Bagster. 1854.

This truly is supporting the elephant on the tortoise. The subject of this *Disciplina Arcani* (Secret Doctrine) is one in which conjecture overtops and conceals knowledge. That at some date the Pagan distinction of esoteric and exoteric observances and doctrines was introduced into the Church is certain, but uncertain is the exact time, and almost as uncertain the points which it affected; but there is no danger in asserting that the second century is too early, and that the doctrine of the Trinity was not included. The matter is a device of the Roman Church, who has thus tried to carry her peculiar usages back beyond the vouchers of history. As applied to the Heavenly Witness question, it is merely a conjecture founded on an assumption: the assumption is, that the passage came from John's hand; for had it not been *in*, it could not have been left *out* of the Greek MSS. in the second century; and the conjecture is, that, being *in*, the passage was so left out. As the hare must be caught before it can be cooked, so these words cannot be shewn to have been omitted unless their actual existence in Greek MSS. of the second century is proved beforehand. "Perhaps, however, it will suffice if it is shewn that though not Greek, yet Latin MSS. contained them?" We cannot answer in the affirmative; and if the authority of the Latin translation were as good as that of the Greek originals, we should be compelled to remind Dr. Turnbull that he can find no trace of the words in the Latin till several centuries after the age he has mentioned. Thus discomfited, the apologist has recourse to bold statement. "When Tertullian in his tract against Praxeas, says, *Qui tres unum sunt non unus*, he evidently quotes the words of the disputed clause, as bearing on the question of the unity, and quotes John x. 30, *Ego et pater unum sumus*, in further proof of that point. Of course Tertullian had read both passages in the existing Greek Manuscripts, which were then not a hundred years old" (p. xv). "Evidently" and "of course" are suspicious words. Their argumentative value may generally be ascertained by prefixing a negative to each, so that "evidently" means *without solid grounds*, and "of course" *without sufficient reason*. A writer quotes a passage in Latin; therefore he read the passage in Greek! He quotes a passage from somewhere; therefore he quoted the passage from existing Greek MSS. of the New Testament! It would, however, be no compliment to ask the writer if he knew the meaning of the verb "quote," and we are in consequence driven to the alternative of telling him that he has made a mistake, since Tertullian's words ("which three are one") are not a quotation from 1 John v. 7, 8. These words used by Tertullian are found in the Vulgate translation of John, namely, *tres unum sunt*. Three words in common to establish a quotation!—as if the words might not come from some other authority, or have their source in Tertullian's own mind. If, indeed, we refer to Tertullian

himself (cap. xxv.), we find that while, when he quotes, he not unusually employs the forms of quotation, here he has no form of the kind, but is led by his argument to select from his own vocabulary the words he is said to quote. Contending against Praxeas, whom he charges with making Father, Son and Paraclete, one person (*unus*), he declares and tries to shew that they are "one thing" (one "substance," *unum*). These are his words: *Ita connexus Patris in Filio, et Filii in Paracleteo tres efficit cohærentes, alterum ex altero, qui tres unum sunt non unus; quo modo dictum est Ego et Pater unum sumus*; that is, in English, "Thus the connection of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in the Paraclete, makes three cohæring persons, the one cohæring with the other; which three (persons) are one substance, not one being; after the manner in which it is said, I and Father are one (*unum*, not *unus*). Now let it be observed that Tertullian does here quote from John, but it is from the Gospel (x. 30); that in so doing he employs a sign of quotation; that while he quotes from the Gospel, he does not even refer to the Epistle, since he speaks of the *Paraclete*, and not of the Spirit; and that he is arguing, not of the Trinity at all, but of the substantial unity (*ad substantiæ unitatem*) of the three, as against an opponent said to have asserted their absolute oneness (*non ad numeri singularitatem*). The unity of substance, not the trinity of persons, was the point at issue, and the citation of a text proving (as is thought) that the one was three, would not have helped an argument whose aim was to shew in what sense the three were one.

The argument founded by Bengel on the alleged *Disciplina Arcani*, appears to have been abandoned by its own author. Put forward by him in a string of aphorisms, it is omitted in a corresponding series of notes on the aphorisms which are found in the second edition (1763) of his *Gnomon*. Tacitly referring to the *Disciplina Arcani*, he there half admits its unreliableness in the words, *Minus certa causa esto prætermissionis*—"Suppose the cause of the omission be uncertain;" and concentrates his strength in order to shew that the sense and the connection require the words; on which view it is enough to remark, that later critics have argued the spuriousness of the passage from its interrupting the connection and interfering with the sense.

The most singular circumstance in this singular Dissertation claims notice here. According to Bengel's original opinion, the spurious words were omitted because, expressly teaching the doctrine of the Trinity, they were likely to give offence to unprepared minds. But Dr. Turnbull holds that the text does not convey the mystery, but "merely expresses the unanimity of testimony" (p. xviii). If the text is not Trinitarian, how could its Trinitarian tendencies cause its omission from the Greek manuscripts? If its import is even doubtful (and doubtful it undoubtedly is), the doubt must surely have saved it from erasure,

since it could not have been very formidable. And if this text, though doubtful, was erased, how came the ecclesiastics to retain the baptismal formula, which Trinitarians regard as so decisive a proof of their peculiar dogma? In truth, however, the whole affair is clutched out of the air, and has an interest solely as shewing to what lengths even respectable men may be carried when they drift away from the rigour of simple fact and sound reason. Dr. Turnbull might find useful admonition in words used by his favourite Bengel on this matter: *Non pauci ex iis qui dictum hoc ipsum recte religioseque defendunt, justo tamen sunt avidiores in conquirendis et adhibendis ejusmodi quoque fulcris quæ nullam firmitudinem habent*: "Not a few of those who rightly and religiously defend this passage, are, however, more eager than they should be, in seeking and exhibiting supports even of such a kind as are devoid of strength." In these words might Dr. Turnbull's remaining argument be characterized.

With an imperfection of knowledge which proves him unequal to his task, he makes a final appeal to Greek MSS.

"The Complutensian Polyglott contains the passage; and, as it now appears, that text was formed from the most ancient and correct MSS. which the library of the Vatican could furnish, having been lent to Cardinal Ximenes by the Pope for this work expressly, and duly returned to their place. How many or (of?) what character these MSS. were, remains at the present time unknown: but there they are still, and may be one day brought to light, when it is probable the passage will be found in some of them; and even in the uncial MSS., C. D. E. F., it might have existed, for anything known to the contrary, as they are mutilated in this part of Scripture."—P. xiii.

We have transcribed at length this passage, as affording to the learned reader a specimen of the unqualified, nay incorrect, way in which Dr. Turnbull writes. To rectify all that is amiss in the passage would occupy too much space. One or two remarks must suffice. Wetstein long ago adduced a chronological argument which has never been answered, and which makes it more than doubtful that any MSS. from the Pope helped to form the Complutensian text. We translate Wetstein's words: "To say the truth, there are chronological grounds which compel us altogether to doubt whether the Complutensian editors, while editing the New Testament, had any Vatican MSS. at hand. The printing of the New Testament was finished on January 10, 1514. Not till the last of February in the preceding year was Leo X. elected, being sick at the time; on the 11th of April he was crowned. Not till after this did he occupy his mind for the restoration of letters, and place Philip Beroald the younger over the Vatican Library. Let, then, the impartial reader consider with me the time necessary for doing all these things, as well as the distance of the places, and then determine whether it was possible that a Vatican MS. could reach Complutum (Alcala) in

time, that is before the completion, not to say the commencement, of the edition of the New Testament.* If, however, any MSS. supplied by Leo X. were used, they could have been of but little value; for, in opposition to Dr. Turnbull's statement, the best and most recent critics declare that the Complutensian text of the New Testament was formed according to modern authorities. Who so familiar with "the most ancient and correct text" as Tischendorf? Who more fitted to determine the age and character of the MSS. employed by the Complutensian editors? This, then, is the judgment of that learned and impartial authority—*Haud dubie, ut ipso textu probatur, ad codices aliquot recentiores instituta est indolis ejusdem qua sunt superstium plurimi*: "Without doubt, as is proved by the text itself, the edition was formed after the model of some recent MSS., resembling in character very many of those still in existence."

As a last resort, Dr. Turnbull claims the testimony of "two Greek MSS. of value." So far as we can make out what he means, the two are the Codex Guelpherbytanus D. and the Codex Monfortii sive Dubliensis. Certain is it they are both of late date, and so of little or no "value." The former is assigned to the 13th century by Tischendorf, and to the 16th by Griesbach; the latter is assigned to the 16th century by both. In the former, if Griesbach is to be believed, the passage of the Heavenly Witnesses was added by a later hand; and the latter is the only Greek MS. which has the passage from the hand which wrote the rest of the Epistle. The actual "value" of authorities so recent is an infinitesimal quantity which words refuse to utter. Of the same magnitude is the opinion of Dr. Turnbull, when set in opposition to that of all the principal authorities, several of whom delivered their judgment after passing in review whatever consideration, correctly stated, appears in his Dissertation.

Several errors of minor consequence found in Turnbull's Essay we pass over, in order to place before our readers the following, from the pen of Dr. Orlando T. Dobbin, who, besides studying the whole question carefully, has made the Montfort, Dublin or Britannic Manuscript the subject of a special study.†

"The question whether the celebrated passage, 1 John v. 7, be genuine or not, has so engaged the attention of the learned during the last three centuries, that there is hardly a library in all Europe, from the Vatican to the Bodleian, from Madrid to Moscow, in which the Manuscripts of the Greek Testament have not been examined, in order to determine whether it really proceeded from the pen of St. John. The result of history and laborious examination is, that of all the Greek Manuscripts of the Catholic Epistles now extant, of which more than a hundred have been quoted by name, independently of those which have been quoted in the aggre-

* Wetstein's N. T., Prolegomena, p. 117.

† See his learned work, "The Codex Montfortianus. A Collation," &c. Bagster. 1854.

gate, the passage has been discovered in only one; and that single solitary manuscript is not only at least as modern as the fifteenth century, but has a remarkable reading at 1 John v. 6, which was manifestly taken from the Vulgate; and therefore has neither sufficient antiquity, nor sufficient integrity, to be entitled to a voice in a question of sacred criticism. Mr. Travis reckons two MSS. now extant which contain the passage; for he brings into the account not only the Dublin, but likewise the Berlin Manuscript. But as the latter is unquestionably a transcript from the Complutensian edition, with various readings, occasionally interspersed in the text from R. Stephens's edition of 1550, it cannot be admitted as evidence in a critical inquiry, because a thousand such MSS. may be fabricated at pleasure. If we may reckon written copies of printed books as equivalent to Greek Manuscripts, I am surprised that the Codex Guelpherbytanus D. is not added to the number; for this copy has the passage both in Greek and in Latin. Unfortunately, however, it is so modern as to contain the Latin translation of Theodore Beza. To remedy this deficiency, various attempts have been made to shew that there existed formerly Greek Manuscripts which contained the passage, though it is rejected in general by those which are now extant. It is true, that in attempts of this kind there is little expectation of success; for the Greek Fathers not only have never quoted the passage even in their warmest disputes about the Trinity, which they certainly would have done if the passage had been known to them, but actually quote the sixth and eighth verses in succession, without the words *ἐν τῷ ουρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσι. καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ*. It is certain, therefore, that the passage was not in their Greek Manuscripts. Nor was it contained in any of the Greek Manuscripts from which the ancient versions were made, not excepting even the Latin. It is totally unknown to the MSS. of the Old Syriac version: it is wanting in the New Syriac, or Philoxenian version, which was made in the beginning of the sixth century, and collated with Greek MSS. at Alexandria in the beginning of the seventh: it is wanting also in the Arabic MSS., as well of the version printed in the Polyglots, as of that which was published by Erpenius: it is wanting in the Ethiopic, the Coptic, and the Sahidic: it is wanting in the MSS. of the Armenian version, and in those of the Slavonian or Russian version: and lastly, it is wanting in the most ancient MSS. even of the Latin version.

"To suppose, therefore, that the passage ever existed in ancient Greek Manuscripts, is contrary to the rules of probability founded on actual experience. And what renders the supposition still more improbable is, that the origin of this passage may be clearly traced in the Latin version. For though in the text of the most ancient Latin Manuscripts no traces are visible of 1 John v. 7, yet in some of them it is found added in the margin, or interlined by a later hand; but in various shapes, as a mystical interpretation of the spirit, the water, and the blood: hence, in those Latin manuscripts which have the passage in the text, it appears sometimes in one form, sometimes in another; and, what is particularly to be noted, it is so far from having any fixed place, that in some MSS. it is added before, and in others after, the eighth verse. Its origin, therefore, in the Latin is not a matter of conjecture, but of historical fact.

"Further: we know in what manner, and at what period, it was transplanted from the Latin into the Greek. In the year 1215, Pope Innocent III. held a general council in the Lateran, in which was condemned a work of the Abbot Joachim, who had written against Lombard, Archbishop of Paris, on the subject of the Trinity. In the acts of this council, which were written originally in Latin, and are printed in Harduini *Acta Conciliorum*, Tom. VII. pp. 1—78, the two verses, 1 John v. 7, 8, were quoted from the Vulgate. These acts, with the quotations from the Vulgate, were translated into Greek, and sent to the Greek churches, in the hope of promoting a union with the Latin, which was one of the subjects of debate in this Lateran council. About a hundred years after this period, the Greeks likewise began to quote 1 John v. 7, and not till then, though the First Epistle of St. John had been known to them full thirteen hundred years."

B.

ON A MISREPRESENTATION OF JOHN BIDDLE BY DR. VAUGHAN.

SIR,

IN the "History of England under the House of Stuart," by Robert Vaughan, published under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge it is said concerning John Biddle, "He also denied the omniscience, omnipresence and immutability of the Divine Nature, affirming that the Deity existed in bodily shape, and was subject to human passions, the language of Scripture in these respects being to be understood literally and not figuratively." Now I wish to know whether there is any foundation for this strange assertion respecting Biddle. In the account of him in Wallace's *Biography of Antitrinitarians*, I can find nothing which gives the least ground for such a statement. So far as relates to the Deity being subject to human passions, especially of the vindictive kind, I think the charge of representing the Deity as subject to them, and taking the figurative language of Scripture in too literal a sense, applies much more to John Milton and John Calvin than to John Biddle.

T. C. HOLLAND.

LINES SET TO MUSIC.

As one by one our friends depart,
So long united to the heart
In joy and sorrow too,—
Thou who didst weep, forgive the tear;
Who didst console, now deign to cheer;
Who saidst, "Fear not," bid *us* not fear;
And peace of mind renew.
At most, but a few years can glide,
Ere each shall join the lov'd one's side,—
Soul-cheering promise given!
They are "not lost, but gone before;"—
Have cross'd the river, reach'd the shore,
And from the eternal heights look o'er,
And beckon us to heaven!

L. M. THORNTON.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

The Congregational Year Book, 1858. Pp. 304. Jackson and Walford, London.

ALTHOUGH the publishers have found it necessary to increase the price of this volume of denominational statistics 50 per cent., the public who want the information have value for their money. The proceedings of the Congregational Union, carefully reported as in former years, are more calm and peaceful than on recent preceding occasions. The opening Address, spoken by Rev. John Stoughton, would seem to claim for the ministers of the Union a greater doctrinal agreement than is generally believed to exist amongst them. He ignores the existence in his body of heretical notions on the person of Christ and his atonement, as well as on other points of so-called "evangelical truth." But while asserting the substantial agreement of the assembled ministers "in the grand verities of evangelical faith," he admits that there are perilous influences abroad, and he specifies the philosophical, the transcendental and the mystical. His remarks on the mystical school of theologians are smart enough. A blight has been latterly running the round of the vineyards of the world, and in like manner the fog of mysticism seems to be rushing over the vineyard of Christ, not sparing even the little portion of it where Unitarians labour. Thus speaks the Chairman of the Congregational Union :

"The mystic spirit threatens us just now. It is rising like a haze over the landscape of thought, seemingly to some eyes sunny and golden; but it dims and hides what should be clear and distinct, while in its bosom it carries a blight under which what it touches droops and withers. To minds of a particular cast, there is, I know, a fascination about the tendency. They have a natural affinity for the thing; it requires strong self-control to resist it; while in other cases we witness only the wretched aping of intellectual individuality; a poor and pitiful attempt to be very dark and mysterious, under pretence of being very wise and very sublime. The danger is serious to both classes, to the thoroughly original and to the merely imitative, to the real men and the simple monkeys, and to the last more than the first."

Mr. Stoughton honestly and boldly warns his brethren against the defence of orthodoxy "in a spirit which is not orthodox."

"For an utterance of Scripture truth as clear as thought and words can make it, for zeal on its side even to confessorship and martyrdom, I plead and pray. Only I would also urge on you and myself the cultivation of such a spirit of truthfulness, wisdom and love, in connection with such utterance and such zeal, as shall leave those whom we teach no room to charge us with inconsistency when we say, from press or pulpit, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

To utterances like these, what true Christian man will not say, Amen! When this amiable man and graceful writer goes on to specify the mysteries which are included in the evangelical faith of his denomination, we cannot but feel how great the load which "orthodoxy" lays on the understanding and the conscience, and feel greatly enhanced the loving appreciation of the simpler faith of the gospel which Unitarians cherish.

In the course of its session, the Union repudiated the latitudinarianism suspected to lurk in certain congregational quarters, by a resolution declaring that the imputations of unfaithfulness to the sacred principles of evangelical truth are unfounded and unjust; and recording the assurance that the ministers of their churches, as a body, maintain an unabated attachment to those great Christian principles in which they have been incorporated. If any "orthodox" anxieties are allayed by general declarations of this kind, they cannot be very deep-seated. The reader of ecclesiastical history knows that heresy has escaped untouched by tests far more stringent than this.

The Magazines which have been under the management of Dr. Campbell were, as a matter of precaution, separated from the Union and vested in the charge of one clerical and three lay trustees. The trust-deed provides, amongst other things, that the recipients and administrations of the fund (the produce of the Magazines) shall be restricted to persons whose general views of faith and practice are in consonance with the "Declaration of Faith and Church Order" published by the Congregational Union. From the report on the Societies we learn that the Colonial Missionary Society has raised during the year nearly £6000. The Home Missionary Society employs 50 missionaries and gives aid to 57 ministers. It has 118 stations and 365 chapels and rooms for public worship. The adult hearers average 30,000 persons, and the Sunday scholars amount to 13,492. The income of the Society was £7500. The Irish Evangelical Society has expended about £2000. Through the Congregational Board of Education, 36 students have completed their course and been appointed to schools, and 43 young persons are now in the institution. More than 800 children are in the model schools. The English Congregational Chapel-building Society has in four years applied to its specified object the sum of £14,000. The Committee is now anxious to raise a permanent loan fund of £20,000, to be used exclusively and permanently in loans in aid of chapel extension. The Congregational Pastors' Assurance Society seems yet in its infancy, having only 22 assuring pastors, an annual income of £250, and a capital of £800.

Results like these must be pronounced highly creditable to the organization, zeal and liberality of our Congregational brethren. At the autumnal assembly of the Union, a report on Chapel Extension was handed in. It refers to the altered taste of the denomination for ecclesiastical edifices in accordance with the principles of church architecture, and speaks of the change as the necessary result of the position of their buildings, which are no longer placed in by-ways, but take their places in our public thoroughfares. "There have been whispers breathed, at times both loud and deep, by some, that the religion which flourished under humbler roofs will die out in these places, where architectural grandeur is visible. But the religion that dies out from such a cause must be a poor affair indeed; it must have been nigh to extinction before it entered its new abode." It reports that the new and handsome chapels are attended by a crowded throng of hearers. The Society has now voted aid to 72 chapels, containing altogether 40,000 sittings, at a cost of £134,000.

During the year 1857, 50 Congregational ministers died, their average age being above 61 years, and the average length of their ministry

about 34 years. An interesting feature of the volume is the biography of ministers deceased during the year, amongst which are Dr. John Harris, Mr. Richard Knill, Dr. Walter Henry Midhurst, and Rev. Robert Alfred Vaughan, the ingenious author of the "Hours with the Mystics." The English Congregational Colleges are eight in number, and are now educating 172 students,—the Lancashire College having 30; Spring Hill, 19; Cheshunt, 22; and New College, London, 48. 227 Congregational students have taken degrees in the University of London, viz., 13 LL.B., 31 M.A., and 183 B.A. During the past year the position of students at the B.A. and Matriculation examinations was strikingly good; a New-College man carried off the first prize for the Scriptural examination, and a Spring-Hill-College man obtained the second prize. The volume is adorned by engravings of Congregational churches and colleges of recent erection, amongst which the Halifax church and the Spring-Hill College are very elaborate and striking.

In order to keep up the pious fraud of the *Three Denominations*, six Scottish ministers are recorded as supplying the Presbyterian element. When will the Two Denominations grow ashamed of this poor device? Dr. Jabez Burns is the solitary representative of the General Baptist element. Some particulars of Dr. Williams's Library and Trust are given. From the list of Trustees, it appears that the following gentlemen are among the recent appointments: Mr. W. A. Case, M.A., Rev. G. V. Smith, Mr. W. D. Jeremy, M.A., Mr. Sydney Aspland and Mr. Edward Enfield. From the brief notice of Lady Hewley's Charities, it appears that the Trustees have determined to make allowances to ministers of new and additional chapels in poor and populous districts, and capable of accommodating 600 persons, for a period not exceeding four years, £40 in the first year, and to be gradually diminished; and that the counties of Salop, Stafford, Nottingham and Lincoln, be added to the Northern counties; the cases of the applicants from the new districts to be considered after the Northern counties' cases have been provided for.

The Sunday-School Penny Magazine for 1857.

THIS Magazine, under the able conduct of Rev. John Wright, of Bury, is well entitled to the hearty support of all engaged in Sunday-schools, and may be suitably introduced into the family as a means of amusing and instructing domestics and its younger branches. The number for January also is before us, and gives evidence of the intention of the Editor still further to improve the Magazine. The wood-cuts are a valuable addition to the work.

The Unitarian Almanac for 1858, being the Second after Bissextile or Leap Year. Edited by John Webb, Resident Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

MR. WEBB'S annual Almanac and collection of Unitarian statistics comes this year somewhat late into the field; but it is welcome. Its use to all who carry on much correspondence with Unitarians is matter of experience. Several improvements characterize the present issue; but it may in many respects be made still more complete.

Liberal Christianity in relation to the Age: a Sermon preached on the Commencement of his Ministry at Stamford-Street Chapel, London, February 14th, 1858, by the Rev. Thomas L. Marshall. Published by Request of the Congregation. London—E. T. Whitfield.

VIEWED in its relations to existing forms of belief, and to past and present developments of the church of Christ, this discourse is liberal in its tone, wide in its sympathies, and hopeful in its spirit. It commences with a manly protest against the priestly assumptions that have characterized so many sections of the church, in all but the primitive times, and marks them as the greatest heresies. It recognizes the providential work of those noble bands of labourers whom God from time to time, in Heathen and in Christian lands, has raised up to till his moral and spiritual vineyard, and reproves the petty spirit that sees nothing good beyond the boundaries of our own thought. It pleads for a faith in harmony with the highest scientific and philosophic thought of our day, and for a religion that shall ennoble and sanctify the common interests, the humble labours and the daily cares of our domestic circles. It dwells, with evident satisfaction, on the great fundamental truths that underlie well nigh all forms of Christian doctrine, and that may be eliminated from the varied dogmas for which the broken sects of the Universal Church have so warmly contended; whilst it contains unmistakable evidences of a warm and devout attachment to those pure and elevating forms of faith that characterize us as a body of Christian disciples.

The defect in the discourse, to our mind, is to be found in its looking so exclusively to the relations which liberal Christianity bears toward the sects that recognize Christ and Christianity in their divine aspects, to the all but entire neglect of those relations which it ought to bear toward the philosophical theories and the social schemes that have dislodged Christianity, *as a revelation*, from so many noble hearts and minds. Surely the work of liberal Christianity in this age is to make those good and devout men who are labouring on in their own names, feel that the purpose that inspires them, the spirit that animates them, and the law that guides them, are Christ's, and one of its chief objects should be to gather them into the fold of the Church. May the author of this discourse receive power from on high, that shall enable him in his future ministrations to speak as true and as noble words to *unbelief* as in this discourse he has addressed to *misbelief*; and may this sermon be sent forth freely and generously to do its work in the world!

The Whole Family in Heaven and Earth: a Sermon by the Rev. A. E. Lord, of Hersham, Walton-on-Thames. London—Judd and Glass, New Bridge Street.

THE glorious sun of truth and righteousness will prove, occasionally, too powerful to be resisted even by the thickest shelter of creeds and articles, and will find its way through some crevice of the mind or corner of the heart to shed its pleasant beams in shady places. Here is a true disciple of the Master, who, from under the shadows of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and that Church whose bigotry robbed us of Lady Hewley's charity, and who would, if she had been able, have torn away the heritage of our fathers, is proclaiming liberty of conscience and universal charity among all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, differ

they ever so widely in the interpretation of the sacred records of his words and acts.

Mr. Lord takes his text from Ephesians iii. 15, "The whole family in heaven," and after commenting upon "this felicitous expression, which conveys in the most impressive manner the apostle's idea of the happy relation in which renewed humanity stands to God," he proceeds to inquire "of whom the whole family is composed;" and it is to that part of his sermon we wish to call the attention of our readers.

"In every community, nearly, you may meet with some choice spirits who breathe the Spirit of Christ—who ignore everything sectarian and ceremonial as a ground of acceptance with God, and who make Christ all in everything; and wherever we may find them, whether among Conformists or Nonconformists, we recognize them as members of the 'whole family' spoken of in our text. Far be it from us to cherish that exclusive spirit which ignores the Christianity of those beyond our own denominational circle. 'We have not so learned Christ.'"

He then proceeds to inquire, "What are the features of this family?"

"It is a holy family: a true Christian aims to copy his great model. 'I count not myself to have apprehended; but this thing I do—I pursue, I press forward to the mark.' And what is that mark, but the perfection of our nature, as developed and embodied in the character of Christ? And unless there be a consciousness of aiming at this mark, we have no satisfactory evidence that we belong to the family of God. . . . The family is one. The apostle says of all Christians, 'Ye are *one* in Christ Jesus.' . . . Nor is this truth violated by the fact that there are various denominations existing in the Christian Church. It is not necessary that Christians should think *alike* on every topic. This would imply a deficiency of thought, and prevent all advancement in knowledge and grace. . . . The relation of the *family* to the Father is entirely *spiritual*, not *ecclesiastical*. . . . The *true* register is kept not on earth, but in heaven. . . . If they must all belong to *one visible ecclesiastical corporation, which shall have the preference? Who shall decide this?* Do you admit the right of *private judgment* in this matter? If not, then you must go and prostrate yourself before the old gentleman who rules in the Vatican at Rome, and say, 'Thou shalt decide for me. I will do thy bidding, and become thy slave.' But if you admit the right of *private judgment*, then you must allow every man to choose his own costume and his own denomination. I can allow no man or any corporation of men to choose for me. I do not expect that any man will allow me to choose for him. But I cannot, because of this difference of judgment, refuse him fellowship, as if he were not one of the family. The thing is absurd; and yet thousands place themselves in this dilemma, and in the exuberance of their charity commit Nonconformist Christians to the 'uncovenanted mercies of God.' . . . Unity is not uniformity. Unity is a thing of life. Hence we read of the *unity of the Spirit*; and this is not necessarily sameness of sentiment, nor subscription to a certain form of sound words, called a creed, but unity of heart, purpose and aim. But, brethren, *uniformity* is a thing of *death*, not of life. It is incompatible with life."

And so on in the same spirit through the whole sermon. The italics in our quotations are Mr. Lord's own; so our readers will see for themselves the chief points which he wished to impress on his hearers. As the sermon is printed by request of the congregation, it is evident they share the liberal sentiments of their pastor. May they carry them into the practice of their daily life, and so in deed and in word help to enlarge, in an ever-widening circle, the family of heaven on earth! For the consistency of the author of the sermon in theory and in practice, the writer of this notice can bear witness.

INTELLIGENCE.

OPENING OF THE NEW UNITARIAN CHURCH AT HACKNEY.

The completion and dedication of this building gave occasion to some public services of unusual interest.

The new chapel is erected upon the site of that which was taken down last year, but it advances further towards the road, on account of the different arrangement and increased superficial area of its ground plan. The additional prominence thus obtained for the new building has its value enhanced by the advantages of isolation from other structures, and the immediate neighbourhood of well-grown trees and planting, so that it presents a picturesque appearance from every point of view.

Preparations for taking down the old chapel were commenced on the 16th of April last, and on the 8th of the following month the first brick of the new work was laid. Owing to the great depth of the foundations, nearly 15 feet, the sub-structure had not advanced sufficiently to admit of the "foundation-stone" being laid until the 26th of June, on which day, under a glorious sun and in the midst of a gay assemblage of spectators, "the stone" was lowered into its place in the east wall of the north transept. From this date the works advanced rapidly and satisfactorily; the weather throughout their progress was most propitious; and after a few unavoidable delays, they were brought to a successful completion on the 5th of February in the present year, having required nearly ten months for their execution.

The new chapel is cruciform on plan, and accommodates 500 sittings on the ground-floor, and about 50 in the gallery over the western entrance. Its leading dimensions are as follow, viz., total external length, 81. 9; external width across nave and aisles, 43. 0; external width across transepts, 65. 6. Some school-buildings, which were finished shortly before it was found necessary to take down the old chapel, have materially affected the plan of the new structure: it is to their presence that the insignificant proportions of the chancel are mainly due, and the additional cost of transepts rendered necessary.

The exterior of the building is built with Kentish rag-stone and Bath-stone dressings; and as the adopted style of architecture is geometrical Gothic, the traceries of the windows and the moulded

jambes of the doors, executed in the warm-coloured freestone, contrast well with the plane surfaces of the cool grey walls. This variety in the colour of the materials contributes largely to its effect, inasmuch as it possesses but little ornament or architectural enrichment; a spirelet at the south angle of the west front being almost the only prominent feature to redeem it from mediocrity. The spirelet itself is upwards of 64 feet in height; it groups well with the surrounding foliage, and serves as a successful pendent to a large tree, which terminates the north aisle of the nave. There are some effectively carved heads, bosses and finials to the gablets, which connect the square base of the spirelet with the octagonal superstructure, and some characteristic crosses terminating the east and west gables, and the gables of the transepts, which deserve remark, as being the only decorative sculptures on the exterior of the building.

The interior presents more novelty. From motives of economy, a style of construction has been introduced altogether different from that usually employed. It consists of a timber frame-work resting upon light quatrefoil Caen stone piers, in lieu of clerestory walls and proportionately massive supports. The piers are ten in number, and only 13½ inches in diameter, while their height is nearly 16 feet. They separate the nave from its aisles, and carry the whole weight of the roof in the following manner. Upon the top of each capital is fixed a solid fir post, 8 inches square and 8 feet high, which serves to carry a horizontal beam or pole-plate, also 8 inches square, traversing the entire length of the chapel. This pole-plate receives the feet of the nave rafters and the heads of those of the adjacent aisle, and otherwise fulfils the purpose of a solid wall. Curved timber ribs span the nave at each pier, and form a portion of a collar beam truss of the ordinary description; similar ribs, springing from the same level as the last, traverse the nave longitudinally and form equilateral arches, whose apices serve to support the centre of the pole-plate. The spandrels of these arches are filled in with ornamental timber tracery, and produce a rich perspective effect, at a comparatively small cost. The whole of the roof and framing above the piers is stained of a sombre colour, which is left unvarnished: the large expanse of dead surface, thus secured, increases the apparent size of the chapel, and presents a satisfactory contrast

with the brighter colours of the pewing and other details less removed from the eye.

The walls will remain untinted till the autumn, by which time it is expected that they will be sufficiently dry to receive a warm citrine colour, harmonizing with the blue cloth doors and furniture of the pulpit, pews and chancel. Their present unfinished condition is injurious to the interior effect of the building, inasmuch as it distracts the eye by its absence of uniformity and repose.

The ornamental panelling in the chancel will be filled with illuminated texts from Scripture, and its roof, which is divided into compartments by oak ribs, will be painted in deep lapis lazuli blue and powdered with golden stars. Stained glass will be added hereafter.

When these accessories are complete, the ornamental organ, the traceried pulpit, the twisted brass gas standards, the inlaid pavings, the carved corbels, and other minor items of decoration, which at present appear scattered, if not inconsistent, amidst the surrounding baldness, will be united into a homogeneous whole, and contribute to create a more pleasing and satisfactory coup d'œil.

As a whole, the building is eminently successful. Its simplicity of design, and the entire harmony of all the parts both within and without, strike every observer. It is essentially ecclesiastical in its character, and yet avoids some of the faults observable in churches, growing out of a pedantic adherence to the forms of ecclesiastical architecture which grew up before the necessities of Protestant worship existed. The pulpit, which is a great difficulty in modern churches, and which architects sometimes construct with an entire disregard of the uses to which it is to be put, thrusting it into a corner, or even making it little more than a hole in the wall, is here honestly dealt with, and stands forth in sufficiently ample proportions, and on a solid foundation of Caen stone, to the left of the communion-table. It is so placed as to offer the least possible obstruction of view to this interesting part of the church. Due regard has also been paid to the uses of the altar for marriage, there being ample space left between the rails and the front pews. The fitting-up of the communion-table is in the best taste. The rich blue of the cushions and the cloth offers a good contrast to the tint of the rails and the flooring of encaustic tiles. The pulpit and communion-table have been fitted up at the cost and under the direction of the ladies of the congregation.

The opening day was Thursday, March 25th, and the beautiful weather was in favour of a large gathering. About one o'clock, friends from a distance began to arrive, and spent the intervening hour in surveying the building, which elicited general and warm approval. In the school buildings were seen the children of the girls' school gathered together, under the kind supervision of Mr. John E. Clennell (the Treasurer), to enjoy a dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding, that the day might be pleasantly registered in their memories. When half-past two o'clock, the hour for opening the service, arrived, the church was filled in every part by a most respectable assemblage, including the whole of the Hackney congregation and many friends from London and different parts of the country. Amongst them we observed R. N. Philips, Esq., M.P.; Alderman Lawrence, one of the sheriffs of the city of London; Samuel Beale, Esq., M.P., Mrs. Beale and party; R. Kershaw Lumb, Esq., of Cheltenham, and Mrs. Lumb; Herbert New, Esq., the Mayor of Evesham; Robt. Henderson, Esq., of Otlands Drive; H. A. Palmer, Esq., of Bristol, and Miss Palmer; T. F. Gibson, Esq., and his lady; J. A. Yates, Esq., W. Cotton, Esq., Mrs. Leech and daughters, J. C. Lawrence, Esq., John Cumberland, Esq., W. Wansey, Esq., H. A. Darbishire, Esq., the architect. There were also present a granddaughter and great-granddaughter of Dr. Priestley, whose last years in England were spent in the ministry at Hackney. There were present the following ministers, in addition to those on whom the opening services devolved: Rev. J. J. Tayler (and the ladies of his family), Rev. Edward Tagart, Rev. Dr. Sadler, Rev. Henry Solly, Rev. Hugh Hutton, Rev. Dr. Harrison, Rev. M. C. Gascoigne, Rev. Wm. Forster, Rev. J. C. Means, Rev. H. Black, Rev. H. Ierson, Rev. George Kenrick, Rev. Dr. Cromwell, Rev. John Rix (of Stratford), Rev. Samuel Bache (of Birmingham), Rev. John Gordon (of Edinburgh), Rev. Chas. Beard (of Gee Cross), Rev. Henry Green (of Knutsford), Rev. Charles C. Coe (of Leicester), Rev. William Clack (of Soham), Rev. James Humphreys.

The first notes of devotion heard in the building, a simple anthem sung by the choir alone, proved that it is well calculated to do justice to musical sounds. The prayer which immediately followed, uttered by the minister-elect, Rev. R. Brook Aspland, amidst the profound stillness of the crowded congregation, proved to the still greater satisfaction of those interested in the matter that the church is well suited to the human voice in uttered speech.

Indeed, every word of the devotional service and the sermon were (so far as we have learnt) heard distinctly, as well by those who were standing at the distant entrance of the building as by those who had obtained seats within. The Scriptures read in the introductory service were parts of 2 Chron. vi. and John iv. One of the introductory hymns was specially composed for the occasion by Rev. Hugh Hutton. It was this :

“Come, Father, come in smiles of love !

Thy name our souls revere !

These gates of praise we ope to Thee—

Oh deign our vows to hear !

We wait Thy blessing on our work,

To sanctify this place,

That here Thy presence may be found

By all who seek Thy face !

Bless'd Father ! let Thy glory rest

Within this earthly shrine,

And here Thy truth its power display

In tokens all divine ;

That, when Thy children mourn their sins,

Or droop 'neath sorrow's load,

Thou may'st be near, to ease their woe,

And guide them on their road !

To Thy sole name, our Father, God,

This temple hallow'd be ;

And in each heart an altar burn

With incense worthy Thee !

Thy consolations grant our souls,

Thy free salvation give ;

And when our worship here shall cease,

Raise us with Christ to live !”

The sermon was preached by Rev. Thos. Madge. From the text, John iv. 23, he proceeded to shew that the Being designated by our Lord, the Father, is the only proper Object of religious worship. In proof of this proposition, appeal was made, first, to the faith and worship of the Jews ; secondly, to the precepts and example of Christ ; and, thirdly, to the language and conduct of the Apostles. It is difficult to give anything like a fair analysis of a discourse consisting for the most part, as it did, of references to various passages of Scripture under the respective heads just mentioned. The points of the argument were thus summed up towards the conclusion of the sermon : “I have thus,” said the preacher, “briefly stated the Scripture evidence in favour of the worship which is paid to the Father only. The ground upon which this practice rests is clearly defined and plainly exhibited. There is no obscurity hanging over it. It is not enveloped in mists and clouds, but lies open to the view of every beholder,

and presents itself in the volume of the New Testament, like the angel standing in the sun. When we find Moses and the Prophets expressly and solemnly inculcating the worship of Jehovah alone ; when we see that Jesus Christ reiterates this doctrine, and adds to it that of himself he could do nothing ; when we reflect that he republishes the command, not only in spirit and substance, but in exact form and letter, giving us too the very words after which our prayers are to be modelled ; when we find the apostles also, by their precepts and example, all following the same line, all tending to the same point, all avowing that we are to worship the Father and the Father only,—I cannot see of what avail any opposing arguments can possibly be. When placed by the side of the direct positive evidence in favour of Unitarian worship, they vanish into nothing, melt and are dissolved like the mists which are dispersed by the beams of the sun ! While, then, we first and most of all endeavour to magnify and glorify the name of the Lord our God for all the great and marvellous things that He has done for us, while we extol ‘Him first, Him last, Him midst, Him without end,’ let us also tune our lips to the praise of Him whom God himself delighteth to honour, and who, under God, is constituted the great Head and Bishop of our souls.”

This is a very bald outline of a sermon which was characterized by closeness of reasoning, aptness of Scripture illustration, and fervency of thought. The whole was delivered with that simple earnestness which is Mr. Madge's characteristic, and with an elocution both musical and impressive. At the close of the sermon, the preacher asked the congregation to give their offerings in a manner worthy of themselves and the occasion. Then followed a hymn composed by the Rev. Hugh Hutton, in adaptation to a well-known sacred air of Weber. It was beautifully sung by the choir.

A large part of the congregation then adjourned (though many lingered for a time in the church and the adjoining burial-ground) to the Manor Rooms, which were filled to overflowing. A blessing was asked by Rev. Edward Tagart, and the benediction by Rev. Wm. Forster. The chair was taken by Robert N. Philips, Esq., M.P. The déjeuner, which was sufficiently substantial and yet elegant, was served by Mr. Gurney, of Hackney. About half-past six o'clock, the CHAIRMAN, who was supported on one side by Sheriff Lawrence, and on the other by Rev. Thos. Madge, rose to give his opening address. He commenced by saying that,

standing before them, as he did, personally unknown, he could only suppose that he owed the distinction to the circumstance that he was a friend of their minister-elect. He had long known that gentleman, and had had many opportunities of seeing him engaged in the performance of his duties elsewhere. No man could be more beloved than he was there, and his removal thence would be to many the source of deep regret. It must have been to him very gratifying to be summoned to a new scene of duty by the flock to which his honoured father ministered so long and with such eminent success. The beautiful chapel which they had that day assisted to open must excite in the minds of all great admiration. Looking at it, they could not but have a feeling of joy. It proved that the true worship, as they thought it, the worship of the one only God, was immovably established in the convictions and feelings of the Hackney congregation. The Chairman then glanced at the past history of Nonconformity in Hackney,—referred to the original meeting-house in which Bates and the pious Matthew Henry served God,—to the second Nonconformist house, in which Mayo and Price, Priestley and others worshipped—and then spoke in terms of deep respect of the memory of Belsham, Kentish, and the late Rev. Robert Aspland. To all their forerunners who had stood true to the principles of religious freedom, they owed a large debt of respect and gratitude. The Nonconformist and Unitarian church of Hackney had a right to be proud of the annals of their history and of the noble characters of the men who had successively been its ministers. But they must look at the existing state of things, as well as at the past. Changes were perpetually going on in churches as well as individuals. A century and a half ago, when the Gravel-Pit meeting-house was built, and even afterwards, angry and bitter hostility was entertained against all who took the liberty to dissent from the faith and worship established by law. A great change for the better had taken place in this matter; but there was still a kind of brand fixed on those who, as was the case of the Unitarian church, dissented from the popular faith of all the sects. In some particulars they were less powerful than they were half a century ago, when some of the gentry and many wealthy merchants took their place in the ranks of the English Presbyterian Dissenters. Those men had for the most part left the Unitarian church and conformed. It was now more confined to the middle class, who had always shewn a large degree of independence in the matter of religious profession. To that

class they must now almost exclusively look. Their means were limited, and this created a difficulty, only to be got over by general co-operation. The class who now supplied the staple of our congregations were, if not rich, intelligent, and likely to continue steady in their religious profession. He then described the zealous and successful labours of his own pastor in the North (the Rev. John Cropper, of Stand), who had attached several intelligent and estimable persons to the flock. It was a satisfaction to him (the Chairman) to think that many of those who joined Unitarian congregations were thereby eventually elevated in their worldly condition as well as in their mind. Of the general character of the Unitarian body he had a very high opinion. He thought that they would safely bear a comparison with the members of any existing sect. He always found them among the foremost when any good work had to be done. In the position of the Unitarian church, it was of great importance that kindly feelings and catholic principles should prevail. They necessarily attached great importance to personal independence. Zeal for that might endanger kindly and Christian feeling. But they must allow others to think as freely as they claimed to think themselves. He had seen with pleasure many instances of differences of opinion merged in kindly sympathy. It was in part under the influence of that feeling that he had come amongst them that day to assist in inaugurating the ministry, in a new locality and a new church, of his friend Mr. Aspland. The Chairman then called the attention of the meeting to the first sentiment, on which he expatiated a little, and then gave, amidst general cheers, “The First Lady of the Land—may her example as a Wife and Mother long continue to give purity to our morals and refinement to our manners—Queen Victoria! May her Throne, immovably founded on constitutional principles and supported by her People’s love, teach the Nations and their Rulers that in Liberty is safety.”

The CHAIRMAN next gave the old-fashioned sentiment, which he hoped would never be absent from the hearts of Englishmen, “Civil and Religious Liberty all the World over,” and then called the attention of the meeting to a gentleman whose presence amongst them was an instance of no common zeal and of feelings peculiarly warm. The Rev. John Gordon had travelled up during the past night from Edinburgh to join in their meeting, and in a few hours would be returning to his distant home. To him he would gladly entrust the support of the sentiment which he had just enunciated.

Rev. JOHN GORDON, who was received with general and hearty cheers, made some playful remarks on the double burthen placed on him of responding to one sentiment and proposing another which he held in his hands. Happily the two were in some sense one. That to which he felt especially committed was to offer in behalf of the meeting an expression of gratitude to Mr. Madge for his services that morning. There was some identity between that toast and "Civil and Religious Liberty all the World over;" for all the principles of the sermon tended to liberty. What the Chairman had said in respect to his journey was but the truth. The first motive that brought him amongst them was his earnest desire to hear the sermon of his friend Mr. Madge. He had said to that gentleman when he met him, that he ought to preach a good sermon, for one of his hearers at least had come a long way to hear it. Mr. Madge feared he might be disappointed; but he (Mr. Gordon) knew that he should not be disappointed. The great charm of Mr. Madge's preaching was its perfect simplicity and sincerity. As to the sermon delivered that morning, while he was listening to the argument, he felt a passing wonder that any man who was a Christian could be otherwise than a Unitarian. It was so clear and direct and unanswerable, that he could not tell how any one could escape from the pressure of the argument. But conclusive as the argument was in that respect, it was the more delightful to him on account of the manner in which the whole argument was turned into devotion, and was made promotive of practical and religious interests. It would be well if, in the spirit of the sermon, they could subordinate the controversy in which they were engaged with the rest of the Christian world, to the purposes of practical religion. As to the controversy itself, it is worthless as controversy. It is only the bearing of the Unitarian controversy on the removal of obstacles to the religion of the heart, that gives it importance. If it were a matter of mere fighting, the controversy was useless and worse than useless. It was only by the manner in which the controversy clears the way for practical religion, and makes manifest the relation in which we stand to God and to one another, that it can be of any value. But he had another motive. He came there that day to do what he could to shew the unfeigned respect and affection which he entertained towards Mr. Aspland. He came under very peculiar and impressive circumstances, which appealed to the sympathies of other persons. There were individuals before him

who must mix the blessed memories of the past with joyful anticipations of the future, and to them the gathering there beheld must be very impressive. They had assembled to-day not only to open a new house of prayer, but they had met to establish a respected son in a position so long and faithfully kept by his honoured father. He felt he could not stay at home when he had the means of expressing his interest in the events of that day. For a series of years he had acted with Mr. Aspland, and the one feature in his character which had from the first fixed his regard for him was his pure and entire conscientiousness in whatever he undertook. Looking from that feature of his character to the course of duty which they had opened before him, he could not but augur to his ministry the happiest success. In addition to these personal motives, he had been swayed by a desire to mark once more his attachment to the great cause of religious truth, with which the friends to whom he had referred and himself were identified. The influence which might be exercised in connection with Unitarian Christianity was most important. It only required that they should be faithful to the essential principles they held, in order to exercise a great and lasting influence on the religion of this country. These were bold words. But their boldness was justified by one simple consideration. The principles which Unitarians hold bring Christianity into conformity with human nature. That seems to be the religious philosophy of Unitarianism. Whatsoever nature presents to us in the way of fact, or in relation to philosophical speculation, or the practical business of life, the Unitarian interpretation of Christianity harmonizes with it. The God we adore is that God whom Science convinces us can be the only living and true God. The principles which Unitarians draw from the gospel of Jesus Christ are all sanctioned by the natural feelings of the human heart. Looking at the matter in this light, the subject appears as grand as it is plain. The work entrusted to Unitarians is to recommend the religion which harmonizes with every natural feeling. A greater work could not be entrusted to human fidelity. Mr. Gordon concluded, amid general cheers, by proposing, "Our grateful acknowledgments to the Rev. Thomas Madge, for the words of truth and wisdom so eloquently spoken to-day. May he be long spared to the Unitarian Church to illustrate the reasonableness and the moral beauty of pure Christianity."

Rev. THOMAS MADGE said that though he should have been glad had he been per-

mitted to remain quiet in his place, he felt it incumbent upon him to rise and utter his sincere thanks both to Mr. Gordon and the meeting for their kindness. When he accepted the invitation to preach on this occasion, it was with considerable hesitation, because he had resolved for the future to decline all such occasional public duties. He had to consider upon what subject he should preach. He knew the objections felt by many persons to the introduction on such occasions of controversial topics. He himself shared in some degree the feeling; but when he reflected on the indifference shewn by many to their distinctive principles, and the facility with which they slide into fashionable conformity, he threw away all doubts, and resolved to dwell on the main great and impregnable truth on which the Unitarian church is founded. He had also another reason: he thought some strangers might be present; and remembering how gross are the misconceptions that exist as to the Unitarian doctrine, he thought it a suitable opportunity for correcting the false impression. He wished them to see that the worship of Unitarians is the worship enjoined by Jesus Christ himself, and sanctioned by his devout example. He wished them to perceive that Unitarian worship is *scriptural*; that, strong as it is in reason, it is not less strong in Scripture. There was, he hoped, nothing in his discourse that could give reasonable offence to any man. If there were any church that can properly call itself a catholic or a broad church, it was that to which they as Unitarians belonged. Their communion was open to all who confess the Lord Jesus Christ. They could not expect amongst independent minds an entire agreement as to a great number of articles, such for instance as the 39 Articles of the Church of England. Still there must be some agreement of principle. Some unity of opinion is necessary to an unity of action, and there can be no truly comprehensive church unless it be founded on some comprehensive principles. There is a practice growing amongst us,—a practice, he confessed, to which he had some distaste,—of substituting for the word Unitarian or Unitarian Christian, such phrases as Anti-Trinitarian or Non-subscribing Christian. He for one did not like to be described as *non* this or *anti* that. He wished to be known, not by what he rejected, but by what he received. There was certainly no reason why they should be ashamed of their old name. It is an honourable name. It expresses truly and clearly the faith held and maintained by some of the wisest and noblest of the race.

He begged to offer to his Hackney friends his congratulations on the beautiful church they now possessed. It is a simple and very elegant structure, and reflects great credit on the taste and skill of the architect. He would further congratulate the congregation on having the prospect of the services of one who with his father's name inherited his principles. Of that father he (Mr. M.) cherished the memory with deep and affectionate reverence. And to his friend Mr. Aspland himself he would offer a cordial welcome to his entrance on the ministry there, and would breathe the prayer that the work in which he is about to engage might long continue to prosper in his hands.—Mr. Madge resumed his seat amid general applause.

Mr. HERBERT NEW, (the Mayor of Evesham) said the sentiment he had to introduce was this—"Peace and prosperity to the beautiful Church dedicated this day to the worship of the One True God! May it be ever sacred to Religious Liberty, Christian Truth, and Practical Godliness." It was a generous thing in the Committee to place that sentiment in the hands of a layman, a member of a small and far distant church. It was, except in respect of the choice they had made, a wise one, and he felt happy in having the honour to introduce the sentiment, not from any sense of personal fitness in himself, but because he considered the object of the Committee was a definite one, and one which he was bound to carry out. He thought he should not be far wrong in supposing that the Committee, when they placed that sentiment in his hands, intimated to him and all laymen their position and interest in the church, and designed to draw from him an acknowledgment of the position and responsibility of laymen. Because he did entertain a sense of that responsibility, he was glad to speak to the sentiment. Their church conferred upon them peculiar privileges; it gave them the enjoyment of a perfect liberty, which he did not suppose to be enjoyed, in a similar degree, by any other church. The Unitarian church had this grand characteristic. It embraced and hallowed and sanctified all those relations, social and political—those which pressed upon them as men and as citizens, in a degree which no other church did or could do. A large portion of the Christian world, including the church established by law in this country, and nearly all the popular sects dissenting from that church, had their religious principles based on a theory with which Unitarians had no sympathy. The religious doctrine struck out at the time of the Reformation was that of justification by faith, according to which men's

salvation was a matter altogether independent of their conduct and lives. The practical consequence of this dogma was to divide the religious from the secular, to separate their theology from the conduct of their life. The principles held by Unitarians, ignoring this dogma, re-united theory and practice, belief and conduct, on a strictly comprehensive social basis. He regarded this as a grand distinction and privilege. And while it was a privilege to them, it was a guarantee to others of their good citizenship. Where such principles prevailed and were consistently carried out, he entertained good hopes for their country, and for those distant colonies in which happily Unitarian churches were planted and growing. Unitarian laymen, then, had remarkable privileges in the nature of their principles : and if they would enjoy the greatest amount of liberty and confer the best services on society, they must be always true to those principles. The Unitarian church accepts the moral power of character in the place of dogmatic theology ; it puts conduct before orthodoxy. In whatever sphere of life or duty they were occupied, they knew that the Unitarian church would derive some advantage from the contribution which their individual characters might offer. Living, then, in a state of perfect freedom, let them in their private lives carry out their distinctive principles. He would for a moment revert to the terms of the sentiment, which in its other bearings would be enforced by a reverend gentleman near him. Most heartily did he wish that the church that day dedicated to the public services of religion, might be ever sacred to religious liberty, Christian truth and practical godliness. This was the true expression of the hope with which he welcomed the inauguration of that beautiful house of prayer. In asking the expression of that welcome from a stranger, he further believed that they designed to express the wideness of their religious sympathies. He and they alike belonged to a community bound by the holy, true and noble tie of the worship of one God, a worship which, followed by its practical results, would tend to God's glory and to the welfare of mankind. (Applause).

REV. CHARLES BEARD, on being called upon to support the sentiment, said that he could not feel or profess himself quite a stranger in any congregation in which Mr. Aspland, whom he had known so many years, and from whom he had received so many kindnesses, was the minister. In addition to this, Mr. Darbishire, their architect, was one of his oldest friends, and the playmate of his childhood

and a companion in youth. He (Mr. B.) had assisted at the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of the church that day opened. Under these circumstances, he could not profess any feeling of hesitation in speaking in support of the sentiment just introduced to the meeting. He congratulated them on the beautiful building which they had erected, in which was exemplified a purer and nobler art than formerly existed in their ecclesiastical architecture. He believed that the sentiment in his hands was designed to call up their excellent friend, Mr. John E. Clennell, the Treasurer of the congregation. He (Mr. B.) was, he knew, fulfilling the wish of the Committee and gratifying the sense of justice of all concerned, in tendering to that gentleman a public expression of gratitude for his earnest and efficient services in the church office he so well filled. Earnest workers were, he knew, those who wished to have their good works least spoken of. He would therefore not pain his modesty by dwelling further on the subject than to remark that he thought him a happy man, because, after a life of honourable labour, he found himself able, with a robust frame and an undimmed eye, to enjoy the fruits of his toils, and that he had such high principles and such noble objects on which to expend his unexhausted strength. And now he would say a few words in reference to the sentiment, and the principles and objects to which Unitarians are ready to devote themselves. They could not be better expressed than in the phraseology of the sentiment itself : 1, Religious Liberty ; 2, Christian Truth ; 3, Practical Godliness. In that assembly it was scarcely necessary for him to plead in behalf of religious liberty. There were three witnesses, on which his eye had that morning rested, that spoke to them in behalf of the principle. The first witness to religious liberty in Hackney was that venerable tower still standing in the older portion of the churchyard, the only remaining portion of the old parish church, in which the noble-minded William Spurstowe preached, and which he quitted rather than stain his conscience by a dishonest conformity. The next temple consecrated in Hackney to religious liberty was that Old Gravel-Pit chapel in which their fathers worshiped, and which, surviving as it did the building for which they quitted it, must excite regret that they had done this so soon. Their third witness to religious liberty was the beautiful and stately structure in which they had that day assembled for the first time for public worship, which, though Conformist in its structure, was

Nonconformist in its principles. Unitarians acknowledge in the matter of their faith no Master but Jesus Christ. The religious society he was addressing were based altogether on religious liberty. They had not asked their future pastor to declare his assent and consent to any doctrinal articles; they did not impose on the members of their church the signing of any creed or confession of faith. There was a time when this was not so in England. There was a time when the formation of a church on the principle of open communion was a thing entirely without precedent. Their Nonconformist fathers, when they left the church established by law and founded churches of their own, imposed no condition on the faith of their descendants. (Mr. Beard illustrated this and the other topics with great earnestness and eloquence; but we are compelled to contract the residue of our report.) In conclusion, he exhorted them to remember their congregational responsibility. They were about to remove a minister from a position where he was happy and where he was certainly valued. He (Mr. Beard) knew what a minister's responsibilities are. But he must plainly tell them that if in some degree the welfare of a congregation depended on the qualities of a minister, its prosperity depended still more on the qualities of the congregation itself. If the Hackney congregation were thoroughly in earnest about their work—if they realized to themselves that on their devotion to truth and their consistency rested the prosperity of their house of prayer, it would prosper. He would bring his remarks to a close by an apologue. Sir Walter Scott was passionately fond of planting, and he put into the mouth of one of the characters of his *Heart of Midlothian*, the Laird of Dumbiedikes, these words of advice, spoken with his dying breath: "Jock, when ye hae nothing else to do, ye may be aye sticking in a tree, and it will be growing, Jock, when ye're sleeping." They had planted a tree that day, and it would be growing when they were sleeping—aye, when they were sleeping in their last resting-places on earth. If it proved that the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations, the share they had in planting it would never occasion shame or regret.—Mr. Beard resumed his seat amidst applause.

Mr. JOHN E. CLENNELL (the Treasurer), after briefly responding, in suitable terms, to the previous sentiment, said he had one to propose which might be regarded as peculiarly the sentiment of the evening. It was as follows—"The hearty union of Pastor and People in this Church! May

his faith be reflected in their good works, and their charity enkindle his hope. While neither seeks dominion over the other's faith, may they be helpers of one another's joy. United in a common priesthood, may both alike obey the holy orders of Righteousness and Love." He said he was sure no words of his were required to commend that toast to the acceptance of the assembly in Hackney. Their new pastor was the son of one who lived and laboured there for more than forty years, and whose name was associated with the names of those great fathers of their church, Lindsey, Priestley and Belsham; and Mr. Aspland was welcomed by them as a tried and faithful minister, who had laboured for more than twenty years, he believed, in the place which he would soon leave.

REV. SAMUEL BACHE, of Birmingham, who supported the sentiment, said he must express his dissent from some views which he had heard expressed that evening. He could not understand that sort of liberty which went so far as to say that ministers and people should be utterly regardless of differences of religious sentiment, and that any man who was recommended by sincerity in his professed sentiments was eligible to minister among them. If he held such opinions, he should be a member of the Established Church, for he was no advocate for differing for the sake of differing. He entertained a hearty respect for every honest and upright man; but if there were such a thing as truth, and if Almighty God had given them the power of distinguishing truth from error, they were bound to ascertain what was truth to the best of their ability. The principle of entire freedom was not to be confounded with the principle of utter licentiousness; on the contrary, it involved a distinct recognition of moral obligation. In reading the lectures of Dr. Arnold, he had opened up to his mind a deficiency of Unitarianism, and it was that, he believed, which repelled Dr. Arnold from it. Dr. Arnold said liberty was the normal condition of humanity, and man had as much right to freedom of mind as to freedom of limb; but, he said, freedom of limb did not justify a man in being inert and inactive, but, on the contrary, required that he should exert his powers. And this illustration was applied to the mental powers. They were bound, he (Mr. Bache) contended, to use their freedom for the investigation and maintenance of truth; and he believed the reason why Dr. Arnold would have no connection with them was, that he imagined they had nothing positive to maintain. There was nothing more important for them to re-

member, as Unitarians, than that they should avow the conclusions to which the exercise of their freedom had led them. No man stood up more nobly for religious liberty than did the late Rev. Robert Aspland; and he thought his son would go far to better the instruction he received; but he continually exhibited his allegiance to the great principles of the Unitarian body. He was quite sure that his friend, the new pastor, while he would do full justice to the principle of religious freedom, would not sacrifice one iota of what he believed to be the doctrines of Christianity, in order to maintain a spurious and specious form of liberty; for he (Mr. Bache) maintained that that was a spurious and specious form of liberty which was content with the mere condition of liberty, without being at all concerned about the results to which the exercise of that liberty led. (Cheers.)*

After a most cordial reception of the sentiment,

Rev. R. BROOK ASPLAND rose to respond, and on doing so was greeted with loud and prolonged cheers. He said—Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, my feelings during the last two hours have undergone such extraordinary excitement, that I have now risen with a heart throbbing with emotion, and with such a total inability to collect my thoughts as I could wish, that I must throw myself most entirely and unreservedly upon your sympathy and kindness. I am most grateful for the expressions used to-night, personally towards myself; I am profoundly grateful for the expressions of respect and affection for the memory of him whose name I bear, which have come from so many quarters, and which were evidently uttered with a deep feeling of sincerity. I have ever felt that I have a very laborious responsibility in bearing the name that I do. I have ever felt that much more was expected from me on account of the advantages which I had possessed as the son of such a father than I should be able to perform. At the same time, in moments of doubt and difficulty, I have looked to his example, I have thought of his precepts, and when I have felt most embarrassed light has seemed to open out before me, and my path has been clear. There is nothing which my father more impressed upon me than this, that I

should always think for myself, and that when I had gained the clear result of thought I should act it out honestly, be the consequences what they might. I have endeavoured to carry out that principle, and the consequence has been, that I have often been compelled to separate myself from many dear friends, whom I respected and loved; but, knowing the men from whom I have differed, and the principles which guide them, I feel assured that even when I have differed from them most, they have given me, as I have given them, credit for sincerity; and however we may have been separated for a moment, the period has soon arrived when we have been divided no longer. Let me say in reference to this occasion, that among its many interesting and extraordinary features, there is none that impresses me more, or fills my heart with more gratitude, than the kindness and catholicity of feeling of those friends who have come forward to unite with us, although in some matters we have of late been considerably divided. I regard what has taken place to-day, and what is to take place, as a most happy and satisfactory omen of that union of spirit which I trust will always bind us together. I think I may ask, without any vain boasting, Where is the other church that could have gone through all the trials to which the Unitarian church has been exposed in this transition state, and yet, like that church, have preserved its integrity? For, notwithstanding all our differences, I believe that we are at heart one; that there are many principles which we all agree in valuing, and which no one will consent to give up. Our strength manifestly lies in making our foundation a broad one, making the articles in which we agree few, and adhering to them firmly. I trust that this will be the case with respect to the whole of the Unitarian church; I feel assured that it will be the case with respect to that portion of the Unitarian church in which my ministrations will in future be conducted. The sentiment to which I have to respond refers to the union of pastor and people. Now on this point allow me to say that one reason why I resolved to tear myself away from a connection of one-and-twenty years' duration, and one-and-twenty years' growing prosperity and of unchecked happiness, was, that I felt assured I should find here a most thorough union between the pastor and the people. I looked to the history of this congregation; I saw that, exposed as they had been to circumstances of peculiar trial and difficulty—circumstances of trial and difficulty which would have dissolved many religious societies—they kept together,

* For the report of the speeches of Mr. Bache and Mr. Aspland, we are entirely indebted to our valued contemporary, the *Inquirer*, to the Editor of which we cannot refrain from tendering a grateful acknowledgment of the generous tone of his leading article on the opening of the new church at Hackney.

they remained true to their principles, and even when they were at the lowest point of depression and anxiety, they made that the point from which to start on a new career of usefulness and honour. With all my knowledge of the Unitarian church, I know of nothing more manly, more spirited, nothing shewing a deeper faith in the animating principles of action, than the conduct of this congregation in undertaking the building of the church which has been opened for public worship to-day under such circumstances of depression and trial. I saw in that a proof most gratifying to my filial feelings, that the long-life labours of my father had not been in vain. I saw that his principles, his indomitable faith and zeal, were planted deeply in the hearts of some at least of those who heard him, and I felt that so long as their hearts continued to beat the love of those principles would be maintained. I felt assured that, however small might be the number of the congregation here compared with what it once was, there was a sound and honest basis on which to work. Under these circumstances I am convinced that, notwithstanding the omens of evil which have at various times been held out, with the cordial union of pastor and people we have before us days of comparative prosperity. There are many subjects on which on an occasion like this I might naturally wish to speak, but I feel exhausted, as no doubt the audience is, by the variety of interesting addresses we have heard, and I shall, therefore, bring my remarks to a somewhat abrupt conclusion. Allow me to say, then, that tried as I have been this day by recollections of the past and anticipations of the future, the present hour is not to me an hour of sorrow, but an hour of hope and of subdued joy. I feel that I am about to begin my ministry here with great opportunities of doing good. Although I am not as young as I once was, yet I can thank God for some remaining strength and vigour, and whatever strength and vigour, whether of mind or of body, I possess, shall be honestly devoted to the service of this religious society. For the weaknesses which I have, and I am painfully conscious of them, I shall have to draw largely, my friends, on your candour and patience; but with these extended to me, I trust I shall, with the blessing of God, be in some degree useful to this congregation. (Loud cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN, after some references to the speech just delivered, expressed his great satisfaction at seeing amongst them that day his excellent and valued friend, the Rev. John James Tayler, who adorned

the situation which he held in Manchester New College as Principal and Professor of Theology. He had great pleasure in connecting with the next sentiment the name of one who so well illustrated in his professorial capacity its spirit—"Education in all its branches. The higher our cultivation, the more may it partake of, as the more it needs, the spiritual influences of Religion."

REV. JOHN JAS. TAYLER, who was very heartily received, said he was well content to speak to a sentiment which he presumed was intended to express an opinion in favour of the necessity of a learned ministry. Scholarship and philosophy were found in the ministry of hostile churches; and if the Unitarian church was to thrive, it must have men able to encounter them with their own weapons. Many in professedly orthodox churches were indeed less rigid than of old. They are not now the idle upholders of traditional systems that many of them once were. The sentiment well expressed the necessity of the spiritual influences of religion to keep pace with and guide the higher degrees of intellectual cultivation. With the development of civilization, the claims of Christianity seem to rise with the growth of knowledge and the gratification of taste. But there were many things in their advanced cultivation which seemed to call up those affections of our nature which most needed the humbling and tranquilizing influences of religion. There was much that was wonderful and hopeful in the age in which we live; but there were some influences at work which ought to excite alarm. No one could observe the enormous increase of wealth without also observing the great tendency there was in the privileged classes of society to give the reins of indulgence to that which is voluptuous and sensuous. For his part, when he saw with what strength the undevout elements of our nature were being developed, he could not but feel apprehensive of the result. He turned to the New Testament, and there read what Jesus Christ inculcated—purity, self-denial, untiring benevolence—and felt that many of the active influences at work in the world were in direct opposition to the requirements of the gospel. He felt that the religious body with which he was connected both by hereditary connection and the preference of his reason, occupied a very important position—an importance to be by no means estimated by the numerical strength of those that professed to agree with them, or by the outward front the Unitarian church presented to the world. They were the inheritors, not of

a dead dogmatic form, but of a living principle. That which was a mere form would wither and die; but the principle would grow; it was essential to permanent vitality. He had sometimes been afraid (though that impression had been greatly removed by the tone of that day's proceedings) that Unitarians were in some danger of forgetting their grand distinctive principle of religious liberty, in their effort to stereotype a particular form of doctrine. Truth is a living principle. Whatever lives must grow; and in order to growth, there must, from the very nature of the case, be freedom. He could no more consent to tie himself down to another man's particular apprehension of Christian truth, than he could consent to accept only those forms of beauty upon which he exclusively fixed his approval. He thought it a singular privilege that they inherited from the historical character of their church, those conditions which were favourable to the free and constant growth of our apprehensions of religious truth. Certainly no individual ought to suppress, in deference to any one, his own honest convictions. The peculiar privilege, the great distinguishing feature of their church, was its preservation to every member of speculative freedom and unlimited inquiry. These are the principles he had accepted, and on these he must continue to act. In the devotional service in which they had joined that morning, he was pleased to observe the distinct recognition of the freedom of the church of Christ. It was because the Unitarian was a *free* church, that he rejoiced to minister in it, and to assist in training others to minister in it. His Unitarianism, which he heartily adopted, was indeed not the condition, but the result, of the unfettered exercise of the privileges accorded by his church. Mr. Tayler then offered an expression of his respect and regard for the future minister of the Hackney flock. Whatever were the differences of opinion on some subjects between them, there was left ample ground for mutual respect and co-operation. His friend inherited with his name grave responsibilities. He was now about to step into a position of great importance, long honourably held by his father. Of the talents and usefulness of the late Mr. Aspland, he had a very strong impression. That impression had been greatly strengthened by reading the volumes of his Sermons, in which he found, on the subject of their common Christianity, a breadth of view, a catholicity of feeling, and a nobleness of spirit, which he would confess surpassed his anticipations. After a few remarks on the subject of religious liberty, and the need which large portions

of the world had of it, and of the part which Unitarians might be called upon to play in obtaining for others a greater degree of it, Mr. Tayler concluded by expressing his earnest wishes for the happiness of the pastor and the prosperity of the people of the Hackney Unitarian church.

REV. EDWARD TAGART then paid an eloquent tribute to the beauty of the new building and the skill shewn in its construction by his friend, the architect, Mr. Darbshire, whom he had known from his childhood. The excellence of architecture consisted in two great principles, simplicity and harmony. Nothing could be more perfectly simple than the church in which they had that day worshiped, and every portion of it was in harmony with the rest. They had long known that the Unitarian church was founded on solid Scripture truth. Mr. Darbshire had satisfactorily proved that on that foundation a building could be raised which exemplified what was beautiful in art. He had great pleasure in proposing for the acceptance of the company the sentiment—"Success in his profession to our Architect, Mr. Darbshire! May he have many other opportunities of proving that the simple faith of his Fathers is in sympathy with all that is true in Science and beautiful in Art."

MR. DARBISHIRE acknowledged the compliment paid him, in happy terms, and said that there were, in addition to a suitable architect, other elements necessary to the success of a building, viz., the managing committee, the contractor, and the clerk of the works. In all these particulars he had been most fortunate in his relations to the Hackney church, and he desired especially to record his obligations to the Committee and Mr. Clennell, the Treasurer.

MR. VINCENT COLLIER (Deputy Treasurer) then spoke on the subject of the kind and valuable services rendered to the congregation by those ministers who had given or had promised their services. He spoke especially of the valuable help given them in their need by Rev. Hugh Hutton, whose services in the school-room had been attended by approving and increasing congregations. Of the value and interest of the services with which during the next three months they were to be favoured by no less than 16 Unitarian ministers, and of the kindness with which those gentlemen had undertaken the duty, he, in common with all the congregation, entertained a very strong impression, and would propose—"Our cordial thanks to those Ministers who have in our hour of need taken the oversight of the Flock! May

they receive from the Chief Shepherd that crown which fadeth not away !”

Rev. HUGH HUTTON, in acknowledging for himself and his brethren that expression of good-will and kind feeling, bore his testimony to the harmony and zeal that dwelt in the congregation, and which gave happy augury of its growth and prosperity.

The meeting (including the religious service) had now lasted seven hours, and it was felt necessary to bring it to a close. Some toasts, designed to call up Mr. Sheriff Lawrence, Mr. H. A. Palmer, Mr. Cotton, Dr. Sadler, Rev. H. Green, Mr. J. C. Lawrence and others, were therefore reluctantly withdrawn ; and Mr. Philips having vacated the chair, SAMUEL BEALE, Esq., M. P., was called to it.

Mr. WALTER C. VENNING then expressed the grateful appreciation by the company of the services of their Chairman. Wherever the name of Mr. Philips was familiar, it was known that there did not exist a more ardent and consistent friend of civil and religious liberty. He moved, as the closing sentiment of the day, “The Chairman. Our thanks to him for his varied services to the Unitarian Church. May it never want Laymen of intelligence, station and integrity, to uphold what is true, good and generous.”

It was received with enthusiasm. Mr. R. N. PHILIPS, in acknowledging the vote, expressed the great pleasure which the whole proceedings of the day had given him, and uttered some parting wishes for the comfort of the pastor and the prosperity of the church.

Thus was brought to a close one of the most animated and interesting meetings* we have for a long time attended. The general harmony of feeling was unbroken by those differences of individual opinion which always exist among men of thoughtful habits. In reality, the development of some of those differences of view gave a zest to the meeting. The speaking was generally characterized by sustained power, and ought to remove from the Unitarian body the reproach of being inferior to other Nonconformist churches in the gifts of elocution.

On Sunday, March 28, a fine congregation assembled in the morning, including many friends and strangers. The service was conducted by the minister-elect, and the profound stillness of the assembly during

both the prayers and the sermon evinced the deep sympathy which pervaded the minds of all. The following hymn, composed by Rev. William Gaskell, of Manchester, and specially adapted by him to the occasion, was beautifully sung, the congregation generally joining with the choir :

“Our fathers’ God ! with joy would we
Now dedicate this place to Thee ;
Accept our work of grateful love,
And breathe a blessing from above !

While, one by one, we pass away,
Still, as returns each Sabbath day,
Here may the hymn of holy cheer,
Sound sweet through many a distant
year.

While, swept beneath time’s rushing
tide,

Sink earthly pomp and earthly pride,
Here, shining down the troubled stream,
May faith its brightest radiance beam.

Though grief and trial needs must come,
And tears drop sadly o’er the tomb,
Here may the mourning heart find
peace,

And doubts and fears and murmurs cease.

To all who gather here to pray,
Grant strength according to their day ;
And fill them with an inward might
To fight the good and holy fight.

And when at length, at Thy behest,
They from the strife of battle rest,
May they but lay their weapons down
To take from Thee a glorious crown !”

Mr. Aspland took as his text 2 Cor. iv. 5, 6, “We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ,” &c. The subject, closely deduced from the text, was the character of the Christian ministry and instruction, which the preacher considered in their negative and positive aspects, and made illustrative of the importance of revealed truth and of its prominent doctrines. The sermon concluded with a solemn expression of the preacher’s hopes and prayers for the spiritual benefit of the worshippers.—In the evening the place was for the first time seen by the public lighted up, and the effect quite sustained, perhaps heightened, the impression which the view of the building by daylight had made. A magnificent congregation assembled, seats having to be temporarily placed in the aisles. The service was conducted by Rev. James Martineau, who took as the text of his sermon, Luke iv. 16, “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up : and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” After a peculiarly beautiful introductory description of the thoughts

* There was one drawback from the pleasure of the day ; it was, that some pickpockets, members of the London “swell mob,” mingled with the congregation and robbed four ladies of their purses.

and feelings of the Saviour on his return to the place of his early youth and manhood, after his mind had realized the divine mission entrusted to him, the preacher entered on the general subject of seasonal and local worship, vindicating it from the objections of the mystic on one side and the sceptic on the other, and shewing its adaptation to human nature and its congeniality with the entire ordering of God's providence. If the profundity of some of the preacher's views taxed his hearers' closest attention, the figures by which he illustrated his subject in many cases rivetted and delighted them by their originality and exquisite beauty. The sermon closed with an application of the subject to the special occasion, the genial spirit of which could not but gratify those who have the deepest personal interest in the new Unitarian church at Hackney. The sermon was followed by a warm recommendation of the society to the generous help of their friends of other churches. The whole services of the day were closed by a very simple and impressive prayer, preceded by this hymn, also composed by Rev. William Gaskell :

"Father ! before we part, once more
Thy gracious blessing we implore,
And pray that henceforth we may be
True to our Master, true to Thee.

To each of us the work is given
To sow on earth the seeds of heaven ;
To plant the trees of righteousness,
Whose fruit for evermore shall bless.

O grant that we may daily feel
How this great work demands our zeal ;
And labour more and more to prove
Our Christian faith by Christian love !

And when the death-call Thou shalt give,
May we be found prepared to live
Where all who served Thee truly here
Dwell in a world without a tear !"

The collections at the opening services amounted to £120.

We are glad to be able to give our readers with this No. a lithograph drawing of the building.

In concluding this report, which we have at the cost of some toil on the part of both Editor and printer completed just in time to put our Magazine to press, we desire to ask the sympathy and help of the Unitarian body at large on behalf of their brethren at Hackney. The facts are in truth the best recommendation of the case. The congregation three years ago rebuilt their school-rooms and other apartments, at a cost of about £400. In the progress of the work, the insecurity of the old chapel was proved beyond doubt, and

the congregation were compelled to take the necessary measures for the erection of a new place of worship. The cost of the new church has been £4200, and by the subscription of the members and the liberality of some of their friends a sum of nearly £2700 has been collected, leaving a deficiency £1500. To the diminution and eventual extinction of this debt, the congregation will devote their whole energies ; but, reduced as they are by many changes in numbers and money-power, they look not unreasonably to the sympathy and help of friends throughout the country, who recognize with them the importance of maintaining, on a site enriched by so many memories dear to Unitarians as that of Hackney, a church worthy of their confessors and their holy cause.

BIRMINGHAM UNITARIAN BROTHERLY SOCIETY.

At the annual meeting of the Birmingham Unitarian Brotherly Society held in the room at the back of the Old Meeting-house, on Tuesday evening, February 9th, 1858, the following report was read by Mr. John Cross.

The number of pupils in the Unitarian Sunday-schools in Birmingham at the present time, 1572 ; increase during the year, 9. Course of instruction—reading, writing, arithmetic, religious culture, history, grammar, geography, dictation and composition, imparted by 292 teachers ; increase 22. Volumes in Libraries, 9926. Subscribers to Libraries, 719 ; increase, 24. Amount paid to Libraries for use of books, £60. 4s. 8d. in 1857. Number of pupils depositing their savings with the schools, 534 ; increase, 66. Amount deposited, £338. 9s. 1½d. ; increase, £183. 1s. 4½d. during the past year. In connection with the Brotherly Society and Sunday-schools is the old-established Benefit Society, now in its sixtieth year, which, besides providing gratuitous surgical attendance, allows to its members who have subscribed 4d. per week for five years the unprecedented sum of 18s. per week in cases of illness. Number of subscribers to the Benefit Society, 458 ; increase, 38. Amount received by subscriptions to Benefit Society, £244. 4s. 1d., exceeding 1856 by £20. 18s. 3½d. Amount received by interest on capital, £247. 6s. 9d. Amount paid for illness and deaths, £268. 15s. 3d., being an increase of expenditure over 1856 of £113. 4s. 3d. Total capital of Brotherly Benefit Society, £5586. 2s. 0½d., being an increase during the year 1857 of £164. 13s. 4d.

OBITUARY.

Feb. 20, at Londonderry, aged 54, Mr. WILLIAM SAWERS. The deceased was a native of Scotland, and settled in the "Maiden City" rather more than thirty years ago, as agent for a Glasgow firm. He was a remarkable instance of what may be done for self-culture, even by men who are compelled to devote twelve hours a day to the calls of traffic. Not long after his settlement in Derry, he became connected with the "Historic Society," composed of about a dozen young men of his own age, who were accustomed to meet regularly for discussion, and the reading of original papers in the shape of essay, tale or poem. To this Society he often acknowledged that he was indebted for the awakening of his subsequent taste for intellectual pursuits; and with some of its original members he formed friendships which lasted throughout his entire life. Metaphysics and political economy seemed the branches of learning for which his mind had the greatest aptitude; but he afterwards devoted his attention chiefly to botany, electro-galvanism, and certain branches of natural history. Having easy access from Londonderry both to Lough Foyle and Lough Swilly, he threw himself with all the quiet earnestness of his character into an investigation both of the salt-water and fresh-water *algæ* of the neighbourhood. His labours were rewarded by the detection of many species which were not supposed to be natives of the Irish seas, and by the letters, acknowledging the importance of his services, which he received from the most eminent cultivators of the same branches of science.

Coming, as Mr. Sawers did, from Scotland, he had been bred, almost born, a Trinitarian and a Calvinist; but about the year 1827, a most important change

was wrought in his own religious convictions and feelings, and in those of the most intimate of his friends, the present Rev. R. E. B. Maclellan, of Maidstone. By what appeared to be the merest accident, there fell into their hands a copy of Dr. Drummond's "Essay on the Trinity;" and while their companions turned away from it in terror, the two friends gave it careful and frequent perusal. They read it together; they discussed every argument it contained—nay, almost every sentence; they compared all its quotations with the Bible; they sought confirmations or over-throwals of its criticisms in every available quarter; and after at least a twelvemonth spent in serious and anxious research, they both became convinced that Unitarianism and Christianity were identical. Neither of the friends had ever cause to regret his change of theological sentiment; and the one who is gone doubtless found his new opinions a sufficient stay in death, as they had been a sufficient guide in life.

With but little external manifestation of feeling, Mr. Sawers was a firm, a constant, and a generous friend. He gave a zealous support to all institutions having for their object the mental improvement of the masses. He was an advocate of various measures of a liberal character, at a time when Derry was the hotbed of Toryism; and the same may be said of many of his youthful associates. His general conduct was irreproachably moral; his character as a man of business upright and high-principled; his advice in commercial matters, and also in civic affairs, was highly valued; all which qualities, added to his desire for the public good and his scientific attainments, cause his death to be much regretted among his fellow-citizens.

R. E. B. M.

MARRIAGES.

Feb. 22, at Upper Brook-Street chapel, Manchester, by Rev. J. H. Hutton, B.A., Mr. THEOPHILUS DAVIES to MARY, eldest daughter of the late Rev. HENRY ACTON, of Exeter.

March 8, at the Rotherham Unitarian chapel, by Rev. J. Brettell, Mr. CHARLES BUTCHER, of Thornhill, to Miss HARRIET TEASDALE, of Wortley.

March 20, at the Unitarian chapel, Newchurch, by Rev. George Hoade, JOHN

TATTERSALL to ANN SCHOLES, both of Newchurch. On the same day, HENRY NUTTLE to ALICE BRIDGE, both of Rawten-stall. As these were the first marriages celebrated in the chapel, they were each presented with a very handsome Bible.

March 21, at the Old meeting-house, Bessel's Green, Mr. PHILIP AUGUSTUS FLETCHER, of Sevenoaks, to MARY, daughter of Mr. THOMAS FLETCHER, of River-head.